



BELL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATION

Lanier Center

(254) 773-4457 • Fax (254) 773-7535
P.O. Box 3745 • Temple, Texas 76505-3745

June 16, 2010

Dear Parents,

There has recently been an increase in Shigella infections in Bell County, with the increase being seen primarily in children age 10 and under. Shigella is the name of a family of bacteria that causes an intestinal infection. The most common symptoms of shigella infection are diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, severe cramping, and vomiting. In some cases, the stool may be bloody.

Shigella germs are most often spread directly from one person to another, especially among children. Often the infection is spread through the stool, or on the hands and skin of a person infected with Shigella.

Please remember the following:

- Children with diarrhea may not return to school/daycare/camp until 24 hours after the diarrhea has stopped.
- Anyone with diarrhea should not swim for 1 week after the diarrhea has stopped. *This includes shallow water play areas, such as a kiddie pool or splash area.*
- **The most important thing you can do to prevent a shigella infection is to wash your hands!** Please make sure that your children wash their hands with soap and water after every bathroom visit and before every meal.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your family physician or the Bell County Public Health District at 254-773-4457.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "DonnaLee Pollack".

DonnaLee Pollack, RN, BSN
Epidemiology Nurse
Bell County Public Health District