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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS  
COMMUNICATIONS

# NEWS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Shigellosis in Sedgwick County

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – The Sedgwick County Health Department (SCHD) is continuing to investigate an unusual increase in the number of shigellosis cases reported in Sedgwick County. In September, 35 confirmed cases have been reported for this year so far in children and adults. A total of 16 cases of shigellosis were reported the entire year of 2002.

Shigellosis is a bacterial infection spread by direct or indirect fecal oral transmission. Shigellosis affects people of all ages, however infants and elderly individuals are at greater risk of infection. Symptoms usually include bloody diarrhea accompanied by fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and painful, involuntary contractions of the anus.

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The Sedgwick County Health Department recommends these simple steps to help prevent shigellosis infection and transmission:

1. Always wash hands after using the bathroom, before preparing or serving meals, and before eating. Remember to wash your hands with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Wash fruits and vegetables before eating.
3. Always wash hands after petting animals and changing diapers.
4. Consume water from a safe source.

"The Sedgwick County Health Department stresses the importance of washing your hands," said Sedgwick County Commission Chairman Tim Norton. "By washing your hands, you can protect yourself, and others you have contact with, from getting sick."

Shigellosis is a reportable condition in Kansas and reports of suspected shigellosis should be directed to the Sedgwick County Health Department by calling the epidemiology hotline at 660-5555, via fax 660-5550, or by e-mail, [diseasereport@sedgwick.gov](mailto:diseasereport@sedgwick.gov).

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