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November 21, 2007

For Daycares who fall under the jurisdiction of the Hamilton County Public Health:

Cases of diarrheal illness caused by *Shigella* are continuing to occur at a higher than normal rate in Hamilton County, especially in daycare settings caring for diapered children. These illnesses can be serious for young children, persons with immune disorders, persons in poor health or the elderly.

Effective immediately and until the occurrence of Shigellosis has returned to baseline, Hamilton County Public Health has made the following recommendations to daycare centers in their jurisdiction:

- Children who experience a diarrhea stool at daycare must be sent home and must be tested for *Shigella* before they can return to daycare.
- Children diagnosed with *Shigella* cannot return to daycare until two stools collected 48 and 72 hours after treatment are negative for *Shigella* (or if not treated after diarrhea has ceased).
- Discontinue all water-related activities.

Please refer to the disease fact sheet for Shigellosis for the description of the disease. Children who attend daycare or their family members who have or have recently had symptoms of Shigellosis are requested to consult with their healthcare providers regarding testing. Only a test on the stool can determine what organism is causing a diarrheal illness.

To prevent the spread of these diseases, everyone should thoroughly wash their hands after using the bathroom or changing diapers, and before preparing or eating food.

All persons with diarrhea should avoid swimming.

Your daycare center will notify you when the *Shigella* outbreak precautions have ended. Thank you for your cooperation. If you have further questions, please contact Judith Beiting at (513) 946-7887 or Lisa Craig (513) 946-7849.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Timothy Ingram".

Timothy Ingram
Hamilton County Health Commissioner