

MDR SHIGELLOSIS ALERT

Please distribute this information to all medical staff

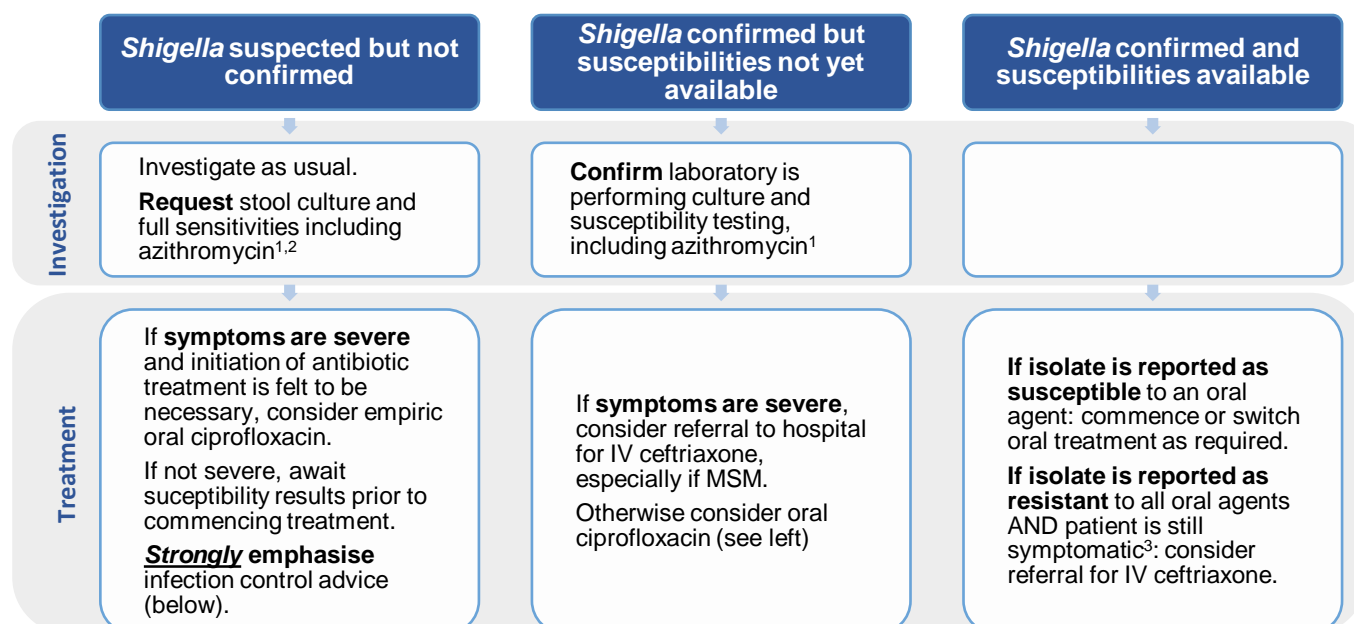
Key Points:

1. Several different multidrug resistant (MDR) *Shigella* strains are circulating among men who have sex with men (MSM) in NSW
2. Request full sensitivities including azithromycin on stool specimens for MSM with diarrhoea
3. Consider referral for IV antibiotics for patients who require immediate treatment
4. Discuss the risk of MDR shigellosis and prevention with all MSM patients

What is the issue?

- A new MDR *Shigella* strain has been identified in people who were likely exposed through male-to-male sexual contact. This strain is resistant to ceftriaxone, cotrimoxazole, ampicillin/amoxicillin AND azithromycin, but is SUSCEPTIBLE to ciprofloxacin.
- This differs from the most common *Shigella* strain which is RESISTANT to ciprofloxacin, cotrimoxazole, ampicillin/amoxicillin AND azithromycin (requires a 5-day course of IV ceftriaxone)

How should I manage patients?



Notes: 1. Not all laboratories perform azithromycin susceptibility testing. If required, this can be done at the NSW Health Pathology Enteric Reference Laboratory (ICPMR, Westmead); 2. PCR only is not recommended as this may delay the availability of full sensitivity results; 3. Commencing IV antibiotics in individuals whose symptoms have resolved is not recommended. They should be given advice on measures to reduce transmission (see below)

Advice for symptomatic patients

- **Don't have sex** until no longer infectious (usually **1 week** after symptoms resolve).
- **Don't prepare food or drink** for others or share utensils, and don't provide personal care for others, share linen or towels.
- **Don't swim** in a pool until **24 hours** after the diarrhoea has stopped.
- **Wash hands often** and thoroughly, especially after using the bathroom and before eating.
- **Patients who work in 'high-risk' jobs** for spreading *Shigella* should not return to work until **48 hours** after their diarrhoea has stopped, including food handlers and those who care for others.

Importance of contact tracing

Particular efforts should be made to trace contacts of those with MDR shigellosis to advise them of their exposure, educate about shigellosis and to seek medical advice if symptomatic. The NSW Sexual Health Info Link (1800 451 624/<http://www.shil.nsw.gov.au>) can assist, including with online contacts.

For further information please call your local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055.