

Summer Months Invite Added Intestinal Woes

County Health Officer Shigellosis or shigella infection, better known to most people as dysentery or summer diarrhea, is an intestinal infection that occurs with greater frequency during the summer months. The infection is not generally regarded as serious unless it occurs in infants and young children or in persons weakened by disease or advanced age. In these cases, shigellosis is always considered to be a critical illness that may terminate fatally when specific treatment is too long delayed.

Some 865 cases of the infection were reported to health departments in Los Angeles County in 1963, while 307 have been recorded so far this year. Since medical attention is not always obtained when the illness is mild, many cases occur that are never added to disease statistics.

Shigellosis is caused by an infection with certain shigella organisms, the first of which was identified in 1898 by the Japanese scientist, Shiga. In the following 20-year period, investigations resulted in the discovery of four major groups of these organisms, any of which may produce a severe intestinal illness.

SHIGELLA INFECTION is frequently called a fecal-oral disease because the causative organisms (germs) are usually transmitted from the infected person to well individuals by way of unclean contaminated hands which leave the harmful intestinal organisms on food, on surfaces frequently touched by others, or on articles such as utensils and children's toys that may be put into the mouth.

Though in years past occasional outbreaks of shigella in the United States have been related to the contamination of public water systems or food supplies, such occurrences are now rarely reported. Factors that do remain closely associated with

the occurrence and spread of the infection include poor housing and overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, and bad personal hygiene. That community outbreaks are now rare is due to the high level of housing and sanitation that, for the most part, usually prevails in this country.

BUT THE LEVEL is not uniform. In those sections of the community where overcrowding is common and

where income, housing and sanitation are below average, cases of shigellosis still occur. The infection usually spreads from person to person within the home and often, especially when there are large numbers of young children around, from household to household as well.

Shigella may also become a wider community problem when an infected person, who is either an unknown carrier of the disease organisms or

has a mild unrecognized attack of the disease, is employed around food. Through unclean personal habits he may transmit the infective agents to other individuals by way of contaminated food or utensils.

An attack of shigella infection may range from a severe and prostrating illness to the mildest of gastrointestinal complaints. The classical (usual) symptoms in more or less severe cases include abdominal cramps, bloody diarrhea, gripping pains, fever, weakness and nausea. Occasional vomiting may also occur. In a study of hospital records involving 100 children, however, it was noted that the classical symptoms of the ill-

ness did not always occur in all cases. **IT IS THE** rapid loss of body fluids in serious attacks of dysentery that makes the condition so dangerous. This is especially true in the case of young infants, and it is in this age group that most of the deaths from the infection occur.

Prevention and control of shigellosis is based on scrupulous cleanliness and the maintenance of good sanitation in and around the home, including fly control. Once introduced into a household, the infection is difficult to overcome unless preventive medical treatment (antibiotic therapy) is received by all family members.

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Final Unit Of Channel Put to Bid

Bids for the construction of the final unit of the 18-mile Dominguez Channel flood control improvement will be opened July 24, according to Supervisor Burton W. Chace. Bids will be received in the offices of M. E. Salsbury, chief engineer of the County Flood Control District. Formal award of the contract will be made about 10 days later.

The cost of the facility, which runs from Avalon Boulevard to Vermont Avenue north of Wilmington, is estimated at about \$5 million. This section is about two and one-half miles of stone revetted trapezoidal, or slant-sided, channel. Bottom widths of the channel will vary between 50, 78 and 88 feet.

ROUTING of the improvement roughly parallels the San Diego Freeway, passing under the Harbor Freeway between Avalon and Vermont, Chace said.

Work is expected to start on the project two or three weeks after the award, with completion in 28 months.

Dominguez Channel is a key structure in the drainage complex serving the Southwest area of the County. Its headwaters are located in Inglewood and its outlets at San Pedro Bay. Numerous storm drain systems empty into the watercourse along its route to the ocean.

Peninsula Area Tract Approved

Construction of 105 single-family homes on lots located near Palos Verdes Drive West and the Palos Verdes city line has been approved by the Regional Planning Commission.

Crown Savings and Loan Association of El Monte is the owner and subdivider.

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