

# 3.7 Less common gastrointestinal infections

## Shigellosis

Forty-three cases of shigellosis were notified in 2007 compared to 54 in 2006 and 36 in 2005 (Figure).

Cases ranged in age from less than one year to 60 years (mean age=27 years, median age=26 years), with more females (n=27) than males (n=16).

As in previous years, *Shigella sonnei* was the most common species reported (n=23). There were also 14 *S. flexneri*, three *S. boydii*, one *S. dysenteriae*, and two cases for which the species was not reported.

Information on travel history is improving, with eighteen cases (42%) reported associated with foreign travel. The countries of infection reported were India (n=6), Pakistan (n=3), Egypt (n=2), and there was one case associated with travel to each of Afghanistan, Gambia, Ghana, Mexico, Morocco, occupied Palestine Territories,

and United Kingdom. Three cases were reported as being acquired in Ireland, and for the remaining 22 cases, country of infection was unknown or not specified. The number of cases by species and country of infection is reported in the table below.

In the last decade, the number of cases of shigellosis has remained low in comparison to the number of cases notified in the early 1990s.

While no shigellosis outbreaks were notified in Ireland in 2007, typing of *Shigella* isolates can provide useful information on the relatedness of strains which can be used by public health to outrule/include cases during investigations of case clusters. The National Salmonella Reference Laboratory in University College Hospital, Galway can provide services for serotyping, and where appropriate, Pulsed Field Gel Electrophoresis (PFGE) of *Shigella* isolates.

Table. Number of notifications shigellosis by species and country of infection, Ireland 2007

Species	Ireland	Africa	Asia	Other	Not known/ not reported	Total
<i>S. boydii</i>	0	1	1	0	1	3
<i>S. dysenteriae</i>	0	0	1	0	0	1
<i>S. flexneri</i>	0	2	4	1	7	14
<i>S. sonnei</i>	2	2	5	1	13	23
Not reported/not known	1	0	0	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>43</b>

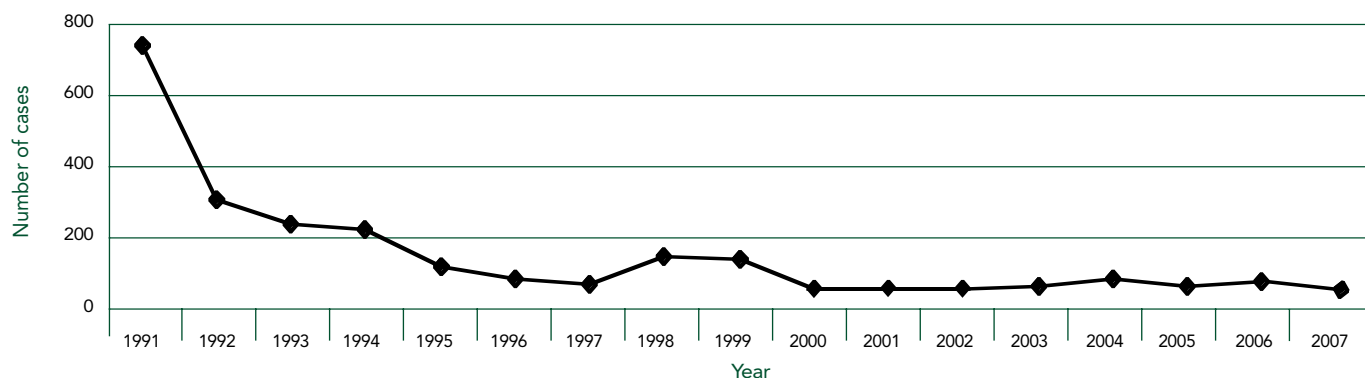


Figure 1. Annual number of notifications shigellosis, Ireland 1991-2007