

Lesson 1 – Understanding How Diseases Spread

GLOSSARY

Common cold

An infection of the upper respiratory tract. Several different kinds of viruses can cause colds, but rhinoviruses are one of the most common causes.

Congenital rubella syndrome (CRS)

A disease that can cause defects in the heart, eyes, brain, or ears or autism if an infant is exposed to rubella virus during development in the womb.

Epidemic

A high incidence of disease in a particular place and time.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease

A mild infection that typically affects young children and is caused by Coxsackie virus. Symptoms include a rash that starts in the mouth but is most commonly found on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.

Hepatitis B

A virus that infects people and can lead to liver disease and cancer.

Human papillomavirus (HPV)

A group of viruses that can infect the skin and cells that line the areas of the mouth, genital and anal regions of the body. In some cases HPV viruses can replicate for years leading to changes in cells that can cause cancer.

Malaria

A disease caused by the *Plasmodium* parasite that often leads to fever, chills, and flu-like symptoms. Malaria often spreads in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

Measles

A highly contagious disease caused by measles virus. Most people recover from measles in about a week, but some people experience complications that can lead to hospitalization or death.

Mucous membranes

A layer of epithelial cells that lines many parts of the body including the digestive and reproductive tracts and secretes mucous to protect the body against pathogens.

Pandemic

A worldwide epidemic that results when virtually an entire population is susceptible to an infection.

Pathogen

A disease causing agent such as a bacterium or virus.

Polio

A virus that infects people's intestines, and sometimes, the brain and spinal cord, leading to paralysis and in some cases, death.

Rabies

A virus that infects people by attacking the brain and spinal cord. A person can be vaccinated after they are exposed and the vaccine still works because of the long time between exposure and illness. But, if a person is not vaccinated, they are almost certain to die from the infection.

Rubella

A viral infection also known as German measles. Rubella typically causes a rash that begins on the face before spreading downward over the rest of the body. Rubella is usually not serious or deadly unless woman is infected early in pregnancy in which case it can lead to the death of the fetus or cause congenital rubella syndrome (CRS).

Salmonella

An infection of the intestine caused by *Salmonella* bacteria.

Tetanus

A disease caused by bacteria known as *Clostridium tetani* that is in soil. The bacteria make a toxin that causes muscle spasms. It is also called lockjaw.