



Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

Infectious agent	Bacterium: <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>
Symptoms	Asymptomatic in healthy individuals. Can cause skin infections, infect surgical wounds, the bloodstream, the lungs, or the urinary tract in previously ill patients.
Diagnosis	Swab and antibiotic sensitivity test.
Mortality Rate	High – if not given the correct antibiotics.
Transmission	Contagious. Direct skin contact.
Prevention	Regular hand washing.
Treatment	Resistant to many antibiotics. While some antibiotics still work, MRSA is constantly adapting.
History	First reported 1961, increasing problem globally.

Measles

Infectious agent	Virus: <i>Paramyxovirus</i>
Symptoms	Fever, runny nose, red and runny eyes, a cough, a red rash and a sore, swollen throat.
Diagnosis	Blood sample and antibody test.
Mortality Rate	Low, but can be high in lower income countries, where treatment can be hard to access
Transmission	Contagious. Droplets from coughs and sneezes, skin contact or contact with objects that have the live virus on them.
Prevention	Prevention via vaccination.
Treatment	Bed rest and fluid intake.
History	Virus first reported 1911, has decreased dramatically in high and middle income countries in recent years although small epidemics do occur. Still a pandemic problem for low income countries.

Flu

Infectious agent	Virus: <i>Influenza</i>
Symptoms	Headache, fever, chills, muscle aches; possibly sore throat, cough, chest pain.
Diagnosis	Blood sample and antibody test.
Mortality Rate	Medium but higher in the very young and elderly.
Transmission	Highly contagious. Inhalation of viruses on airborne particles. Direct skin contact.
Prevention	Vaccination against current strains.
Treatment	Bed rest and fluid intake. Antivirals in the elderly.
History	Present for centuries, epidemics occur at regular intervals.





Thrush

Infectious agent	Fungi: <i>Candida albicans</i>
Symptoms	Itching, burning, soreness and white coating of the mouth or irritation of the vagina with a whitish discharge.
Diagnosis	Swab, microscopic examination and culturing.
Mortality Rate	None
Transmission	Person to person contact but is a normal part of the flora of the gut.
Prevention	Symptoms are caused by overgrowth of this fungus due to antibiotics killing off the normal protective bacteria. Therefore avoid unnecessary antibiotic use.
Treatment	Antifungals
History	Almost 75% of all women have had this infection at least once.

Chlamydia

Infectious agent	Bacterium: <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i>
Symptoms	In many cases there are no symptoms but sometimes there is a discharge from the vagina or penis. Swollen testicles and inability to have children can also occur.
Diagnosis	Swab or urine sample for molecular testing.
Mortality Rate	Rare
Transmission	Contagious through sexual contact.
Prevention	Use a condom during sexual intercourse.
Treatment	Antibiotics
History	First discovered in 1907. Global problem which is on the increase.

Bacterial Meningitis

Infectious agent	Bacterium: <i>Neisseria meningitidis</i>
Symptoms	Headache, neck stiffness, high fever, irritability, delirium, rash.
Diagnosis	Spinal fluid sample and molecular testing.
Mortality Rate	Medium – higher risk in the young and elderly.
Transmission	Contagious, through saliva and inhalation of droplets.
Prevention	Vaccination against many strains, avoid contact with infected patients.
Treatment	Penicillin, oxygen and fluids.
History	First identified as a bacteria in 1887. Regular epidemics in low income countries





HIV/AIDS

Infectious agent	Virus: Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
Symptoms	Failing immune system, pneumonia, lesions.
Diagnosis	Blood sample and antibody test.
Mortality Rate	Medium – high in countries where access to HIV testing and anti-HIV drugs is limited.
Transmission	Highly contagious. Sexual contact, blood to blood contact, sharing of needles, mother to new born transmission.
Prevention	Always wear a condom during sexual intercourse.
Treatment	There is no cure although anti-HIV drugs can prolong life expectancy.
History	First identified in 1983. Currently a global epidemic.

Glandular fever (Kissing Disease)

Infectious agent	Virus: <i>Epstein Barr</i>
Symptoms	Sore throats, swollen lymph glands, extreme tiredness.
Diagnosis	Blood sample and antibody test.
Mortality Rate	Low
Transmission	Not very contagious. Direct contact such as kissing and sharing drinks.
Prevention	Avoid direct contact with infected patients.
Treatment	Bed rest and fluid intake, paracetamol can be used to relieve the pain.
History	First described in 1889, 95% population have had the infection, however, only 35% develop symptoms. Occasional isolated outbreaks.

Chickenpox

Infectious agent	Virus: <i>Varicella-zoster</i>
Symptoms	Blistering rash on the body and head.
Diagnosis	Blood sample and antibody test.
Mortality Rate	Low
Transmission	Highly contagious. Direct skin contact or inhalation of droplets from sneezing and coughing.
Prevention	Prevention by vaccine.
Treatment	Bed rest and fluid intake, antivirals in some adult cases.
History	First identified in 1865. Decreased in countries where vaccination programmes have been implemented. No change elsewhere.

