



# The Chain of Infection

**Way in for microbes**  
Harmful microbes need a way to enter the body before they can cause an infection.

- This can be through:
- The food we eat
  - Inhalation of aerosols or droplets
  - Open cuts or sores
  - Things we put in our mouths

**People at risk from infection**  
We are all at risk from infection, but some are at greater risk:

- People on medication e.g chemotherapy
- The very young/elderly
- People with underlying diseases e.g HIV/AIDS, diabetes

**Source of infection**  
Someone or something carrying the harmful microbes that causes the infection. There are many different sources of infection, these can include:

- People already infected
- Pets or animals
- Contaminated food

**Spread of infection**  
Harmful microbes need a way to be passed from a source to a person. This can be through:

- Direct touch/contact
  - Sexual transmission
- Harmful microbes are also spread via:
- Hands, hand contact surfaces (e.g. door handles, keyboards, toilets)
  - Food contact surfaces
  - Air

**Way out for microbes**  
Harmful microbes need a way to get out of an infected person or source before they can spread to someone else.

- Routes include:
- Sneezing, coughing, saliva
  - Bodily fluid
  - Juices from raw meat and poultry

