

— Infections

Infectious diseases are disorders caused by organisms; such as bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites. Many organisms live in and on our bodies. They're normally harmless or even helpful, but some organisms under certain conditions may cause disease.

Some infectious diseases can be passed from person to person while some are transmitted via bites from insects or animals. Others are acquired by ingesting contaminated food or water or other exposures in the environment.

Signs and symptoms vary, but often include fever and chills. Mild complaints may respond to home remedies, while some life-threatening infections may require hospitalization.

Viral Infections

Viruses are capsules with genetic material inside. They are very tiny, much smaller than bacteria. Viruses cause familiar infectious diseases such as the common cold, flu and warts but they can also cause severe illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, smallpox and hemorrhagic fevers. Viruses can invade normal cells and use those cells to multiply and produce other viruses like themselves. This eventually kills the cells, which can cause illness. Viral infections are hard to treat because viruses live inside your body's cells. They are ""protected"" from medicines, which usually move through your bloodstream. Antibiotics do not work for viral infections. However, there are a limited number of antiviral medicines available. Vaccines can help prevent you from getting many viral diseases.

