

“stop the spread of diseases”



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Other diseases

Pneumonia

1. Pneumonia is a disease which results from the infection of the air passages and lungs by certain germs. It makes it difficult for the sick person to breathe properly and may lead to death within 3-4 days, if not treated. It attacks mostly children under five years of age, and is the leading single cause of their death, but adults may also have it. (*World Health Organization 2008*)
2. Pneumonia and other lower respiratory infections are the second largest killer for all age groups in low-income countries – they kill more than HIV and AIDS, malaria, diarrhoea and stroke. (*WHO 2002*)
3. In sub-Saharan Africa, HIV has resulted in a 45 per cent increase in child pneumonia since 1995. (*source: WHO 2008*)
4. Pneumonia is caused by exposure to risk factors, the environment and infection. Risk factors include malnutrition, low birth weight, lack of measles or whooping cough immunization, indoor air pollution and crowding. Other possible risk factors include diarrhoea, asthma, parental smoking, zinc deficiency, uneducated and inexperienced mothers. (*Rudan et al, 2008*)
5. Pneumonia is easily preventable with vaccines and avoidance of risk factors, and curable with inexpensive antibiotics and basic treatment. But even though there are plenty of vaccines and antibiotics available, childhood pneumonia is still a major threat to child health and survival. (*WHO 2008*)

Diarrhoea

6. Diarrhoeal diseases (including cholera) kill an estimated 1.6 million children each year, mostly under five years of age in developing countries. (*WHO 2005*)
7. It is one of the leading causes of death in the developing world after pneumonia. It kills more people each year than malaria or TB. (*WHO 2002*)
8. Diarrhoea is easily treatable with oral rehydration salts, plenty of safe fluids and proper nutrition.
9. About 88 per cent of diarrhoeal diseases are attributed to unsafe water supply, inadequate sanitation and hygiene. (*WHO 2004*)
10. Malnutrition also makes people susceptible to diarrhoea. In turn, unsafe water and diarrhoea also reinforce malnutrition, as they prevent the absorption of nutrients. (*WHO 2007*)
11. Hygiene education and promotion of hand washing can lead to a reduction in diarrhoeal cases by up to 45 per cent. (*WHO 2004*)

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Other diseases *(continued)*

Tuberculosis

12. Tuberculosis, or TB, is an infectious bacterial disease caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which most commonly affects the lungs. It is transmitted through the air, from person to person via droplets (germs called 'bacilli') from the throat and lungs of people with the active respiratory disease. *(WHO 2007)*
13. The symptoms of active TB of the lung are coughing, sometimes with sputum or blood, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever and night sweats. If untreated, it can result in death. *(WHO 2007)*
14. Someone in the world is newly infected with TB bacilli every second. Overall, one-third of the world's population is currently infected with the TB bacillus. However, in healthy people, infection with TB often causes no symptoms, since the person's immune system acts to 'wall off' the bacteria. Only 5-10 per cent of people who are infected with TB become ill at some time during their life.
15. Those who become ill usually suffer from weakened immune systems or malnourishment, or suffer from another disease like HIV. It is a disease of poverty that affects mostly children, young adults and the elderly. *(WHO 2008)*
16. TB remains one of the leading causes of death in the developing world. It is estimated that 1.7 million deaths resulted from TB in 2006 – 4,500 deaths a day. *(WHO 2008)*
17. Tuberculosis is preventable and curable with a six-month course of antibiotics. *(WHO 2008)*
18. TB is the leading killer of people infected with HIV. *(WHO 2008)*

Measles *(WHO 2007)*

19. Measles is one of the most contagious diseases known, and remains a leading cause of death among young children, despite the wide availability of a safe, inexpensive and effective vaccine for the past 40 years.
20. More than 95 per cent of measles deaths occur in developing countries.
21. The first symptoms of measles, which occur 10-12 days after exposure, include high fever, runny nose, cough, red and watery eyes and small white spots inside the cheeks. After several days, a rash develops on the face and neck and then spreads to the rest of the body. The rash occurs, on average, at day 14 after exposure to the virus, with a range of 7-18 days.
22. Measles is not a severe illness for most children – it is usually only severe for children who are very young, malnourished, do not receive sufficient vitamin A, or whose immune systems have become weakened by HIV or other diseases.
23. Children do not usually die from measles, but from its complications, which include blindness, encephalitis, severe diarrhoea, ear infections and severe respiratory infections such as pneumonia.
24. Measles is easily treated with antibiotics, vitamin A, proper nutrition and fluids.