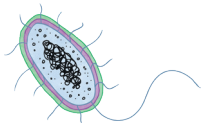
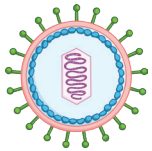
AQA Infection and Response Knowledge Organiser

Communicable Disease

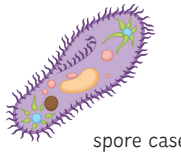
Pathogens are **microorganisms** that enter the body and cause communicable disease (infectious). Plants and animals can be infected by them.



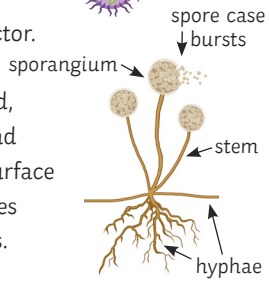
Bacteria are small cells that can reproduce very quickly in the body. They produce **toxins** that make you feel ill, damaging your cells and tissues.



Viruses are much smaller than bacteria; they can also reproduce quickly in the body. Viruses live inside your cells where they replicate. They then burst out of the cell, releasing new viruses.



Protists are eukaryotes (multicellular). Some are parasites which live on or inside other organisms, often carried by a vector.



Fungi are sometimes single celled, others have hyphae that grow and penetrate human skin and the surface of plants. They can produce spores which can spread to other plants.

How Pathogens Are Spread

Pathogens can be spread in many ways, for example:

Water – by drinking dirty water, e.g. cholera.

Air – carried by air and breathed in, e.g. influenza.

Direct contact – touching contaminated surfaces including the skin, e.g. athlete's foot.

Viral Diseases

Measles is spread by droplets of liquid from sneezes and coughs etc. Symptoms include a red rash on the skin and a fever. Measles can be serious or even fatal and it can lead to pneumonia. Most people are vaccinated against measles when they are very young.

HIV is spread by sexual contact or exchanging body fluids. HIV can be controlled be antiviral drugs; this stops the viruses replicating. The virus attacks the cells in the immune system. If the immune system is badly damaged, the body cannot cope with other infections. This is the late stage and is called Aids.

Tobacco mosaic virus affects plants. Parts of the leaves become discoloured. This means plants cannot carry out photosynthesis; this will affect the plants growth.

Fungal and Protist Diseases

Fungal

Rose black spot shows as black spots on the leaves of the plant. This means less photosynthesis occurs. As a result, the plant does not grow as well. It is spread by the wind or the water. They can be treated by using fungicides and taking the leaves off the infected plant.

Protists

Malaria is caused by a protist; mosquitoes are the vectors. They become infected when they feed on an infected animal. The protist is inserted into the blood vessel. Malaria can cause fever and it can also be fatal.

Bacterial Diseases

Salmonella bacteria causes food poisoning. Symptoms include fever, stomach cramps, vomiting and diarrhoea. The symptoms are caused by the toxins produced by the bacteria. Food contaminated with salmonella can give you food poisoning. Most poultry in the UK will have had a vaccination against salmonella.

Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmitted bacterial disease, passed on by sexual contact. Symptoms include pain when urinating and thick yellow/green discharge from the vagina or penis. To prevent the spread, people should be treated with antibiotics and use a condom.

How to prevent the spread:

Being hygienic –

washing hands thoroughly.

Destroying vectors –

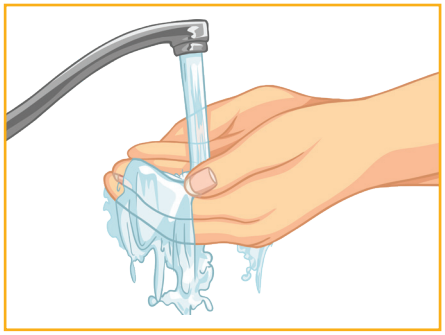
killing vectors by using insecticides or destroying their habitat.

Isolation –

isolating an infected person will prevent the spread.

Vaccination –

people cannot develop the infection and then pass it on.



AQA Infection and Response Knowledge Organiser

Plant Diseases and Defences

Plants need ions from the soil. If there isn't enough, then the plants suffer deficiency symptoms.

Ion	Symptoms
nitrates	stunted growth
magnesium	yellow leaves

Plant Diseases – common signs include stunted growth, spots on the leaves, patches of decay, abnormal growth, malformed stems or leaves and discolouration.

Plants have physical, chemical and mechanical defences to stop pathogens.

Physical – waxy cuticle, cell walls, layer of dead cells.

Mechanical – thorns, hairs, leaves that droop or curl and some plants can mimic other organisms.

Fighting Diseases

Defence System

1. The skin acts as a barrier to pathogens.
2. Hairs and mucus in your nose trap particles.
3. The trachea and bronchi secrete mucus to trap pathogens. They also have cilia which move backwards and forwards to transport the mucus towards the throat. This traps any pathogens and the mucus is usually swallowed.
4. The stomach contains hydrochloric acid to kill any pathogens that enter the body via the mouth.

The Immune System

This kills any pathogens that enter the body.

White blood cells:

- **Phagocytosis** is when white blood cells engulf pathogens and then digest them.
- They produce **antitoxins** to neutralise the **toxins**.
- They also produce **antibodies**. Pathogens have **antigens** on their surface. Antibodies produced by the white blood cells lock on to the antigen on the outside of the pathogen. White blood cells can then destroy the pathogens.
  Antibodies are specific to one antigen and will only work on that pathogen.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations have been developed to protect us from future infections. A vaccination involves an injection of a **dead** or **weakened** version of the pathogen. They carry antigens which cause your body to produce antibodies which will attack the pathogen. If you are infected again, the white blood cells can produce antibodies quickly.

Pros	Cons
Helps to control communicable diseases that used to be very common.	They don't always work.
Epidemics can be prevented.	Some people can have a bad reaction to a vaccine – however, that is very rare.

Fighting Disease – Drugs

Painkillers relive the pain and symptoms, but do not tackle the cause.

Antibiotics kill the bacteria causing the problem, but do not work on viruses. Viruses are very difficult to kill because they live inside the body cells.

Developing Drugs

There are three main stages in drug testing:

Pre-clinical testing:

1. Drugs are tested on human cells and tissues.
2. Testing carried out on living animals.

Clinical testing:

3. Tested on healthy human volunteers in clinical trials. Starts with a very low dose, then tested on people with the illness to find the optimum dose.

Placebo is a substance that is like the drug but does not do anything.

Placebo effect is when the patient thinks the treatment will work even though their treatment isn't doing anything.

Blind trial is when the patient does not know whether they are getting the drug or the placebo.

Double-blind trial is when both the doctor and the patient do not know whether they are getting the drug.

Drugs from Plants

Chemicals produced by plants to defend themselves can be used to treat human diseases or help with symptoms.

Drug	Plant/Microorganism
aspirin	willow
digitalis	foxglove
penicillin	mould - penicillium

New drugs are now made by chemists, who work for the pharmaceutical industry, in laboratories.

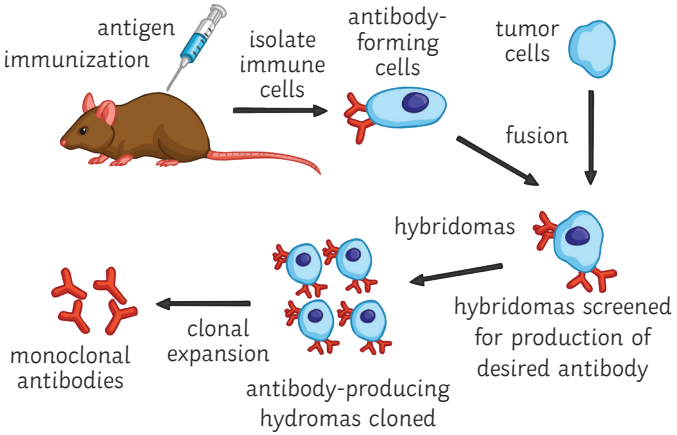
Key Vocabulary

antibodies
antigens
antitoxins
bacteria
blind trial
double-blind
fungus
microorganism
phagocytosis
placebo
protist
toxins
vaccination
vector
virus

Monoclonal Antibodies

Monoclonal antibodies are identical antibodies. Antibodies are produced by B lymphocytes.

It is possible to fuse a B lymphocyte from a mouse with a tumour cell to create a cell called a hybridoma - these can be cloned. They will all produce the same antibodies; the antibodies can be collected and purified.



There are many uses of monoclonal antibodies. For example:

Pregnancy testing: HCG hormone is found in the urine of women when pregnant. Pregnancy testing sticks detect this hormone. The HGC binds to the antibodies on the stick and changes the colour if you are pregnant. If the woman is not pregnant, there is no HCG. This means there is nothing to stick to the blue beads on the test strip, so it does not go blue.

Treating diseases: anti-cancer drugs can be attached to monoclonal antibodies. They can target specific cells (cancer cells) by binding to the cancer marker. This kills the cancer cells, but not the normal body cells.

Research to find specific substances: used to bind to hormones and chemicals in the blood to measure levels. Also used in blood tests for pathogens and locating molecules on a cell or in tissue.

Problems: they have more side-effects than originally thought. For example: fever, vomiting, low blood pressure. They are not used by doctors as much as was first thought.