
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Carrier: A carrier is defined as a person who harbors the infectious agent, without showing any signs or symptoms and capable to transmit the infection to healthy community members.

Chemoprophylaxis: Is the administration of chemicals including antibiotics to prevent the development of infection or to prevent the progress of an infection to an active manifest disease or to eliminate the carrier of a specific infectious agent to prevent transmission of disease to others.

Chemotherapy: Refers to the use of a chemical to treat a clinically manifested disease or to limit its further progress.

Communicable diseases: It is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product which can be transmitted directly or indirectly or through vector from the reservoir to a susceptible host.

Community diagnosis is the assessment of the pattern and burden of disease in the community, and the social, economic, cultural and environmental factors which determine such pattern and burden.

Community medicine is the medical care provided to all community members - the sick and the healthy. It includes assessment of community needs and planning as well as administration of health services based on those needs.

Contact is a person or animal that has been in such an association with an infected person or animal or a contaminated environment as to have had opportunity to acquire the infection.

Contagious disease is a disease that is transmitted through contact. e.g. scabies, trachoma and leprosy.

Contamination: Refers to the presence of infectious agents on the exterior surface of the body, or an article such as clothes or bed spread.

Contamination: The presence of living infectious agents on the exterior surface of the body or on the clothes or articles of the person or on any inanimate object in the environment including water and food.

Control: Refers to the activities conducted to bring a disease or a health problem at a very low level till it becomes no longer a public health problem.

Disinfection is killing the infectious agent outside the human body by direct exposure to chemical or physical agents.

Elimination: Termination of all modes of transmission to a reduction of the incidence of the disease to the zero in a confined or specific geographic locality as a result of deliberate efforts yet, continued intervention methods are required.

Endemic: Is the constant presence of a disease or infectious agent in a certain geographic locality e.g. Bilharziasis in Egypt.

Epidemic: Is the occurrence of a group of illness in a community or a region of an illness of similar nature, clearly in excess of its normal expectancy.

Epidemiology is the study of the frequency, distribution and determinants of health related phenomenon among human population.

Eradication: Termination of all modes of transmission of infection by extermination of the infectious agent. The concept of eradication is a global one. Small pox is the only disease that has been eradicated to date is small pox.

Family medicine is defined as a specialization in medicine which is neither disease nor organ oriented. It is a family oriented medicine or health care where promotive, preventive and curative services are provided to all family members.

Herd immunity is the immunity of the community. The resistance of a group to invasion and spread of an infectious agent based on the resistance to infection of a high proportion of individuals members of the group.

Host is a person or other living animal, including birds and arthropods that afford subsistence or lodgment to an infectious agent under natural condition.

Incubation period (extrinsic) is the period taken by the microbial agent, outside the human body (vector of infection), to become infective to a new host.

Incubation period (intrinsic): Is the time interval between initial contact with an infectious and the first appearance of signs and symptoms associated with the infection.

Infection: It is the entry, development and/or multiplication of an infectious agent in the body of man or animal. Infection is not synonymous with infectious disease; the result of infection may be unapparent or manifested (infectious disease).

Infectious disease: A clinically manifest disease of man or animal resulting from infection.

Isolation of a patient refers to the separation for the period of communicability, of infected person or animals from others in such a place and under such conditions to prevent or limit direct or indirect transmission of infectious agent from those infected to those who are susceptible to the infection or who may spread the agent to others. Category specific isolation precautions includes

Strict isolation implies the segregation in a separate room and the use of mask, gloves and gowns for all those entering the room. Special ventilation in the room is required at negative pressure to surrounding areas are desirable.

Contact isolation implies the segregation in a separate room but patients who are infected with the same pathogen can share the room. Masks are indicated for those who come close to the patient, gowns are indicated if soiling is likely and gloves are indicated for touching infected materials.

Respiratory isolation is applied to prevent the transmission of respiratory infection of infection through air over a distance. A private room is required, patients who are having the same pathogen can share the room. Masks are required for all those who enter the room. Gowns and gloves are not indicated.

Enteric precautions are applied for infections transmitted directly or indirectly by feces. Enteric precautions implies the segregation in a separate room if patient's hygiene is low, gowns should be used if soiling is likely and gloves are to be used for touching contaminated materials. Masks are not indicated.

Drainage/secretion precautions applied to prevent infection transmitted by direct or indirect contact with purulent material or drainage from an infected body site. Drainage/secretion precautions implies the use of gowns if soiling is likely and gloves for touching contaminated materials. Separate room and masks are not required.

Non- infectious disease: A disease which is not due to an infectious agent such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

Non-communicable disease: It is an infectious or non-infectious disease which cannot be transmitted from the reservoir to a susceptible host.

Nosocomial infection (Hospital acquired infection): It is an infection originating in a patient while in a hospital or other health care facility in whom it was not present or incubating at the time of admission; or the residual of an infection acquired during a previous admission.

Outbreak: A more or less localized epidemic affecting relatively a large number of individuals e.g. outbreak of food poisoning in an institution.

Pandemic: The appearance of a disease epidemic form affecting countries sequentially or at the time.

Period of communicability: The time during which the infectious agent could be transmitted directly or indirectly from an infected person to another, from infected animals to humans or from an infected person to animals, including arthropods.

Preventive medicine is the process of averting disease and ill- health by the application of relevant intervention methods.

Public health is the science and art of promoting health, preventing disease and prolonging life through organized community efforts.

Quarantine: Is the restriction of activities of well persons or animals who have been exposed to a case of communicable disease during its period of communicability to prevent disease transmission during the incubation period if infection should occur.

Reporting of disease is the official notification of the appropriate authority of the occurrence of a specific communicable or other disease in humans or in animals.

Reservoir of infection: It is the place or the depot where the infective agent survives grows and multiplies in such a manner that it can be transmitted to a susceptible host. Reservoir of infection is either man, animal, plant or soil or combination of these.

Risk approach is a managerial tool for increasing the efficiency of health care services within the limits of the existing resources.

Risk factor is an attribute or an exposure that is significantly associated with the development of a disease. Consequently, **risk factor** is a determinant that can be modified by intervention methods thereby reducing the possibility of occurrence of disease.

Risk group is a group of the population who possess certain characteristics that makes them more likely to develop a disease and hence, they need health services not required by other population group.

Risk marker is an attribute or an exposure that is significantly associated with the development of a disease but can't be modified.

Source of infection is person, animal, object or substance from which an infectious agent passes to a host.

Sporadic: It is the appearance of cases irregularly and infrequently. Cases are few and separated widely in terms of geographic location and time of occurrence and showing no connection to each other.

Sterilization is the destruction of all forms of life by heat, irradiation, gas (ethylene oxide or formaldehyde) or chemical agents.

Surveillance: is the continuous ongoing collection, analysis and interpretation of health data essential for planning, implementation and evaluation of public health services and activities, closely integrated with the timely dissemination of data to all those who need it. The final link in the surveillance chain is the application of these data to prevention and control.

Zoonosis or zoonotic disease: refers to a primarily disease of animals transmitted to man under natural conditions.