

## Vocabulary: Disease Spread



### Vocabulary

- **Contagious** – the ability of a disease to be passed from one person to another.
  - A highly contagious disease will spread easily from one person to another.
- **Disease** – a disruption of normal body functions.
  - A disease can be *infectious* or *noninfectious*.
  - Noninfectious diseases may be caused by environmental conditions, lifestyle choices, mutated genes, or other factors. Noninfectious diseases are not caused by *pathogens*.
  - Examples of noninfectious diseases include most cancers, diabetes, hypertension, rheumatoid arthritis, and sickle cell anemia.
- **Epidemic** – an unusually rapid increase in the number of cases of a disease.
  - An epidemic that is restricted to one location is called an *outbreak*.
  - An epidemic that takes place on two or more continents is called a *pandemic*. A recent pandemic was the spread of the H1N1 virus (swine flu).
- **Infect** – to transmit a disease.
  - A person becomes infected with a disease when a pathogen invades his or her body.
  - Common ways to become infected include:
    - Person-to-person contact
    - Inhaling a pathogen
    - Eating or drinking contaminated foods
    - Contact with an animal carrying the pathogen
- **Infectious disease** – a disease caused by a pathogen.
  - Infectious diseases include AIDS, athlete's foot, chicken pox, the common cold, hepatitis, influenza (the flu), Lyme disease, meningitis, strep throat, tetanus, tuberculosis, West Nile virus, Covid-19, and many others.
- **Pathogen** – an agent capable of causing disease.
  - Examples of pathogens include bacteria, viruses, prions, fungi, protists, and parasitic worms.