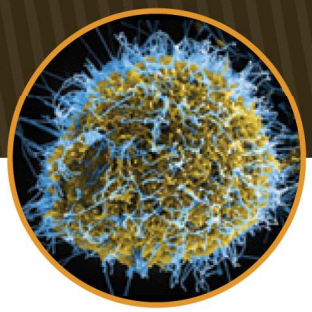
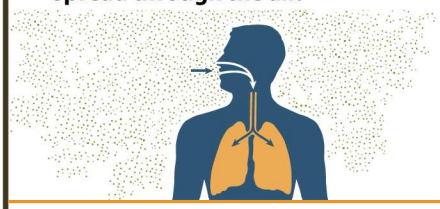


Ebola

What's the difference between infections spread through the air or by droplets?

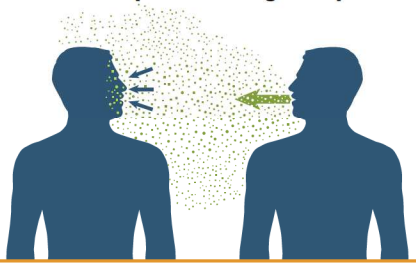
Germs like chickpox and TB are spread through the air.



Airborne spread happens when a germ floats through the air after a person talks, coughs, or sneezes. Germs may land in the eyes, mouth, or nose of another person.

If a germ is airborne, direct contact with the infected person is NOT needed for someone else to get sick. Airborne spread diseases include: chickenpox, tuberculosis.

Ebola is spread through droplets.



Droplet spread happens when germs traveling inside droplets that are coughed or sneezed from a sick person enter the eyes, nose, or mouth of another person. Droplets travel short distances, less than 3 feet (1 meter) from one person to another.

A person might also get infected by touching a surface or object that has germs on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

Droplet spread diseases include: plague, Ebola.

Droplets can contaminate objects like doorknobs.

How do I protect myself from getting sick?

- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Cover your cough!** Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.** Germs spread this way.
- **Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces** like doorknobs, faucet handles, and toys, since the Ebola virus may live on surfaces for up to several hours.

Is Ebola airborne?

No. Ebola is not spread through the airborne route nor through water or food.

Is Ebola spread through droplets?

Yes. To get Ebola, you have to directly get body fluids (like pee, poop, spit, sweat, vomit, semen, breast milk) from someone who has Ebola in your mouth, nose, eyes or through a break in your skin or through sexual contact.

Healthcare providers caring for Ebola patients and the family and friends in close contact with Ebola patients are at the highest risk of getting sick because they may come in contact with infected blood or body fluids of sick patients.

Air, food, and water do not carry the Ebola germs.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of the Director

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