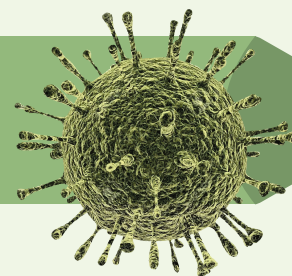


Norovirus



Who am I?

I am a virus that causes gastroenteritis or winter vomiting disease.

How do you catch me?

I spread from one person to another through contact with their stool and vomit, or contact with contaminated food, hands or surfaces.

How do you know it's me?



Watery diarrhoea.



Vomiting.



Stomach pain and nausea.



Body aches.

What to do about me?

If you have me, stay home until 48 hours after vomiting and diarrhoea have stopped. Keep well hydrated, replace fluid lost with water or re-hydration solution (such as Dioralyte). If illness is severe, you may need to go to hospital for fluids into the vein. Antibiotics have no effect on me as I am a virus.

How to keep me away?

Frequent hand washing and thorough cleaning is the best way to keep me away. I can stay on objects and surfaces for days or even weeks and still infect people. I can survive some disinfectants, so special disinfectants may need to be used against me.

Key facts:

Outbreaks are common in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, nurseries, and cruise ships and can also occur in restaurants and hotels

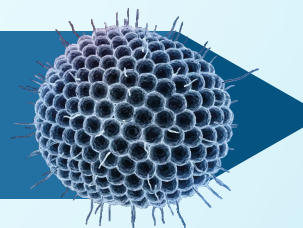
Infection can be worse in infants, the elderly and those with other health problems due to the risk of dehydration, and may require medical attention



I cause between 6,000 and 18,000 hospital admissions*
*per year in the UK

 **IF YOU HAVE ME STAY AT HOME UNTIL 48 HOURS AFTER SYMPTOMS RESOLVE**

Chickenpox



Who am I?

I am a virus known as Varicella zoster.

How do you catch me?

Through the air from a cough or a sneeze, or through fluid from chickenpox blisters. I am highly infectious, so keep your distance from anybody I have already infected.

How do you know it's me?



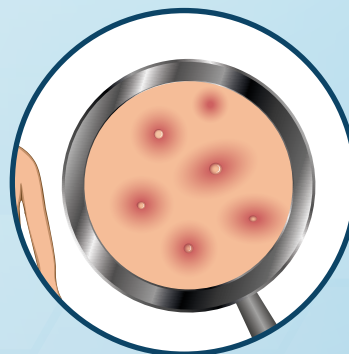
STAGE 1:

I cause small, painful spots anywhere on the body, inside the mouth or around the genitals. They may be pink, red, the colour of your skin or darker in colour. I may also cause fever or cold-like symptoms.



STAGE 2:

The spots I give you become very itchy, fluid-filled blisters, which then may burst.



STAGE 3:

The blisters form scabs which may be flaky or leak fluid.

Key facts:

For elderly people or those with a weakened immune system, there is a bigger risk of pneumonia and encephalitis if you catch me

Once symptoms have subsided, I will remain dormant within your spinal nerves

I may reactivate if your immune system weakens as an ailment known as Zoster or Shingles, which is extremely painful

What to do about me?

Wash your hands regularly and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Avoid scratching your blisters, keep hydrated with plenty of water. You will usually get better after 1-2 weeks without having to see the doctor. If infected with me, keep away from others to make sure they don't get infected as well. Stay at home for at least 5 days from the onset of rash until all the spots have turned into scabs. If you're not sure the rash is chickenpox or if concerned call 111 or speak to your GP.



651,000
cases*



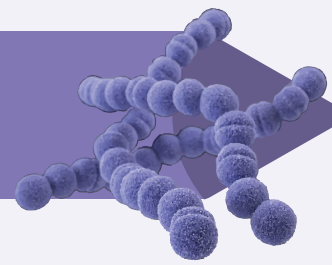
2000+
hospitalisations*

*per year in England & Wales



BEWARE! KEEP ME AWAY FROM PREGNANT MUMS AND BABIES

Scarlet fever



Who am I?

I am a bacterium known as Group A Streptococcus or Group A Strep.

How do you catch me?

I live in the nose and throat and am very contagious. I move through the air in droplets in a cough or sneeze. I also spread when someone touches the skin, hands, clothes or linen that I have been on.

How do you know it's me?



STAGE 1:

I start showing as a high temperature, headache, a sore throat and swollen neck glands.



STAGE 2:

I'll then cause a fine red, raised, sandpaper-like rash 12 to 48 hours later which typically first appears on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. I may also cause strawberry tongue.

Note: rash may look different depending on your skin tone.



STRAWBERRY TONGUE

Key facts:

I usually appear in the Spring and commonly affect children aged 2-8 years

In rare cases I can invade a person's natural barrier, the skin, and enter the blood stream. This is called "invasive Group A streptococcal disease" and can be very serious

Children who have chickenpox are more likely to develop a more serious infection if they catch me. If there is an outbreak of scarlet fever in the school at the same time as chickenpox, teachers should contact the local Health Protection Team for advice

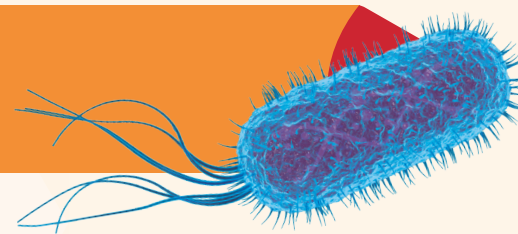


I cause 15,000 to 30,000 cases*
*each year in England



IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ME CALL YOUR GP OR 111 FOR ADVICE

E.coli (STEC)



Who am I?

I am a bacterium called Shiga Toxin-producing Escherichia coli.

How do you catch me?

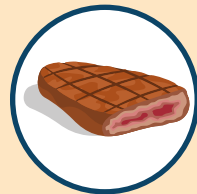
I can infect you if you eat contaminated foods (raw, leafy veg & undercooked meat), touch infected animals on farm visit, come into contact with others that have me, drink water from an untreated source or swim in contaminated ponds or streams.

How do you know it's me?



I give you severe stomach pain and diarrhoea (sometimes with blood in it) 3-4 days after I've infected you. Sometimes I can also cause a fever and vomiting.

How to prevent catching me?



Cook all meat thoroughly until no blood runs from it, especially minced meats like burgers, sausages and meatballs.



Keep cooked meat and dairy products refrigerated well-wrapped or in sealed containers above where any raw meat is stored.



Wash your salad vegetables before eating and wash any utensils used to prepare raw food before using on other foods.



Wash your hands before preparing food and after handling raw ingredients, as well as after using the toilet and touching infected animals and their poo.

Key facts:

I am found in the gut and faeces of cattle and other animals

I produce a toxin, which causes illness, so even though I'm a bacterium, antibiotics will not help

Rarely, I can cause a serious condition called haemolytic uraemic syndrome, which can lead to kidney failure, especially in children under 5

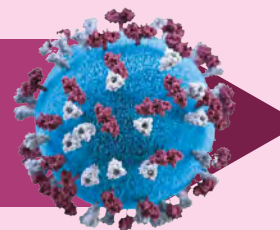


I caused 500 cases* per year
*In England and Wales in 2019



IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ME CALL YOUR GP OR 111 FOR ADVICE

Measles



Who am I?

I am a virus of the paramyxovirus family.

How do you catch me?

I can move through the air in a cough or a sneeze, or in drops of fluid that fall on surfaces. I can stay in the air or on surfaces for up to 2 hours.

How do you know it's me?



STAGE 1:

The first signs I've infected you is a high temperature (above 38°C), cough, runny nose, or red, sore and watery eyes.



STAGE 2:

I cause a rash a few days later that starts from the forehead and makes its way down. The spots are red, raised and clump to form blotchy patches. I can also cause tiny white spots inside the mouth.
Note: rash may look different depending on your skin tone



I am infectious from 4 days before your rash shows until 4 days after. So once you start showing early symptoms, it's best to stay at home and keep away from others.

What to do about me?

Stay at home, don't get close to people unless you know they're immune. Rest, drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration and take a paracetamol or ibuprofen to keep your fever down. I'll usually start to clear up in about a week.

How to keep me away?

The MMR* vaccine is very safe and effective, it is the best way to protect against me and prevents 97% of infections if you have had 2 doses.

*MMR = Measles, Mumps and Rubella.

Key facts:

I am one of the world's most contagious diseases. **9 out of 10 people** that can catch me will do so upon close contact with another person I've infected

I am especially dangerous to people with weakened immune systems, babies, and pregnant women, but I can cause serious illness in anyone

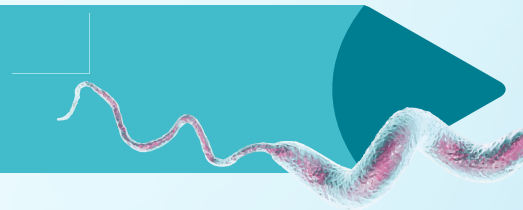
Complications I cause include pneumonia (lung infection), meningitis (infection of the coverings of the brain), blindness and seizures

People often confuse me with chickenpox. But the rash is different (see chickenpox page), and I cause cold-like symptoms while chickenpox causes headache, tiredness and reduced appetite



IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ME CALL YOUR GP OR 111 FOR ADVICE

Campylobacter



Who am I?

I am a bacterium that causes food poisoning.

How do you catch me?

I can infect you if you eat raw or undercooked meat (especially chicken and other poultry) or by drinking unpasteurised milk and untreated water.

How do you know it's me?

I cause diarrhoea and sometimes vomiting. I may not show symptoms until 2-5 days after infection.

What to do about me?

Drink lots of fluids, as I can cause dehydration. In most people, symptoms are relatively mild and improve in 2-3 days. Stay at home until 48 hrs after last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

How to prevent catching me?

Prevention is the best way to manage me.



Chill your food to less than 5°C in air-tight containers.



Make sure chicken and other meats are cooked thoroughly.



Avoid touching any other food when preparing chicken, wash everything down carefully after.



Wash your hands often, especially before and after touching food and after handling pets or other animals.



Only drink mains tap water or bottled spring water.

Key facts:

I live in the gut of animals such as livestock and pets and I am the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK

Babies, young children and the elderly are most at risk of dehydration if infected with me. Keep to your baby's normal feeding schedule



I cause 56,000 cases* of food poisoning
*per year in England and Wales



IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE CALL YOUR GP OR 111 FOR ADVICE

Travellers' diarrhoea



Who am I?

I am caused by many different bacteria (E. coli, salmonella), viruses (norovirus) and parasites (giardia).

How do you know it's me?

I cause diarrhoea (3 or more watery poos a day), tummy cramps and sometimes vomiting. Most cases of me are mild, but for some people it can be severe.

How do you catch me?

You can catch me by eating contaminated or unwashed food or drinking contaminated water from an untreated source.

What to do about me?

If you have me, it is important to stay hydrated, drink lots of bottled water, juice or rehydration solution such as dioralyte. Stay at home until 48 hrs after last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting. Most symptoms tend to last 3 to 5 days and usually get better without you needing to go to hospital.

You should seek medical attention if?



You have blood or mucus (slime) in your poo.



You keep vomiting.



You have a fever.



You have severe stomach pain.

How to keep me away?

Wash hands frequently when travelling, eat well cooked foods, always drink bottled water if you are in a country where tap water is not safe to drink.

Key facts:

I am the most common health issue experienced during travel

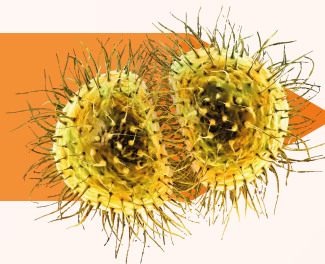
In severe infections, you might need to go to hospital as you will need fluids into your blood stream to prevent you becoming dehydrated, or antibiotics if an infection is suspected

Tap water is often not safe to drink outside of the UK, it can contain bacteria, viruses or parasites. Check before you travel, and if unsure, always drink bottled water (with seal intact)



IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION

Meningitis



Who am I?

I can be caused by a virus or bacteria. The most common type of bacteria is *Neisseria meningitidis*.

How do you catch me?

The bacteria that cause me are very common and live in the back of the nose and throat. I am passed from person to person by coughing, sneezing or by kissing someone who is infected. When the bacteria break through the protective lining of the nose and throat and enter the bloodstream and cross into the brain, it can make you very ill.

How do you know it's me? I can cause...



Fever or shivering.



Severe headache.



Vomiting or diarrhoea.



Limb, joint, muscle pain, stiff neck.



Sensitivity to bright lights.



Rash or pale/mottled skin.



Sleepiness, confusion or even seizures.

Symptoms can appear in any order, rash may not appear at all or may look different depending on your skin tone.

What to do about me?

If you think you have me, do not wait for a rash to develop, seek immediate medical attention, as you will need urgent antibiotics. In severe infections, I can cause a person to be hospitalised. Close household contacts will usually be given antibiotics to kill the bacteria and help stop me from spreading to others.

How to keep me away?

Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself against me. MenB and MenC vaccines are given to infants, while the MenACWY vaccine is given to young people from 14-25 years.

If you are starting school or university, check you are up to date with your meningitis vaccinations.

Key facts:

There are several different groups of bacteria that cause me. The most common are meningococcal A, B, C, W and Y

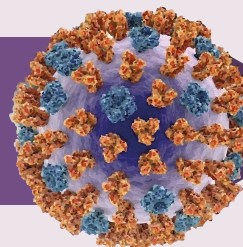
Around 10% of people carry the bacteria with no symptoms, and for most people it causes no harm as they have natural resistance

I can be severe and even if treated, 1 in 5 people will suffer long-term complications such as brain damage, loss of hearing or vision and loss of limbs

Children aged 0-5 are at the highest risk, but there is a secondary peak of cases among teenagers and young adults

! IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ME DO NOT WAIT - CALL YOUR GP OR GO TO A&E IMMEDIATELY

Influenza



Who am I?

I am a respiratory virus commonly called the flu virus.

How do you catch me?

I spread in the air in droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. I can also live on surfaces for a short time and can spread if a person touches the surface where I am, and then touches their own mouth or nose.

How do you know it's me? My symptoms include



Coughing.



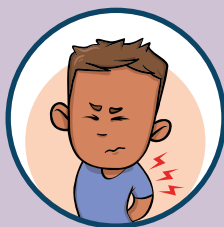
Sore throat.



Sneezing & runny nose.



Fever.



Muscle aches.



Tiredness and sometimes diarrhoea and vomiting.

What to do about me?

If you think you have me, stay home for 3–5 days until better, and drink lots of fluids. Take paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve aches and pains. Antibiotics won't work against me as I am a virus.

How to keep me away?

- Vaccination with the annual influenza vaccine is the best defence against me. The vaccine is given every Autumn as the flu virus is always changing.
- It is also important to practice proper hand washing frequently and cover your mouth and nose when coughing to reduce the risk of infection.

Key facts:

I caused the most severe pandemic in history in 1918, infecting one-third of the Earth's population and led to between 20 and 40 million deaths before it subsided in 1920

The species that cause seasonal flu epidemics are influenza A and B. Influenza C viruses only cause mild infection

I affect all age groups but those that are more at risk of complications or hospitalisation include older adults aged 65 and above, children under 5yrs and people with weakened immune systems or chronic respiratory illnesses

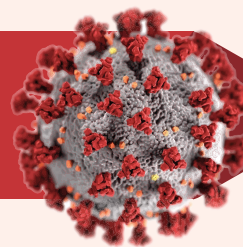


I caused 1,223 deaths*
*in England and Wales in 2019



IF YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE CALL YOUR GP OR 111 FOR ADVICE

COVID-19



Who am I?

I am a virus known as Coronavirus or SARS-CoV-2 virus.

How do you catch me?

I move through the air in droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze, especially in crowded, indoor places with poor ventilation.

How do you know it's me?



I can cause cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.



Fever, chills, headache, muscle aches.



Sometimes I can cause loss of taste or smell.

What to do about me?

If you have me, self-isolate according to Government guidance. If you become seriously ill, hospitalisation may be needed to administer oxygen or breathing support.

How to keep me away?

- Regular hand hygiene.
- Allow air to flow through enclosed spaces as often as possible.
- Take your vaccine when eligible, as vaccination is the best way to shield yourself and others against me.

Key facts:

I recently caused a worldwide pandemic, with over 6 million deaths

Anyone can catch me, but older people, those with certain medical conditions or who have reduced immunity are more likely to become seriously ill

There are several vaccines which help to protect against me. However, poor vaccine coverage gives me an opportunity to mutate which can lead to new variants emerging



IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ME, ISOLATE AND FOLLOW GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Legionella



Who am I?

I am a bacterium found in water known as Legionella pneumophila.

How do you catch me?

You can catch me by breathing in contaminated droplets from water systems such as air conditioning units, cooling towers, hot tubs, fountains, and shower units.

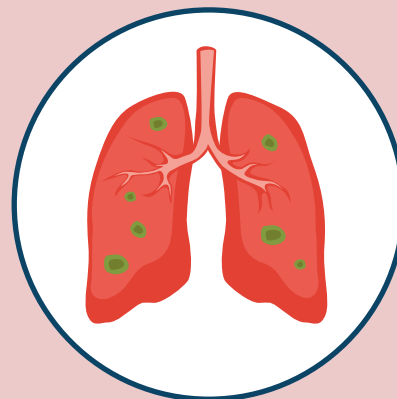
How do you know it's me?



I cause fever, headache, loss of appetite, sore muscles, tiredness and sometimes confusion.



I can cause a cough, shortness of breath and pains in the chest.



In serious cases I cause a severe pneumonia called Legionnaires disease.

What to do about me?

People infected with me usually require hospitalisation and prompt treatment with antibiotics.

Key facts:

I am found in all aquatic environments but become a public health risk when the water I am growing in, is sprayed into the air and inhaled

Outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease are often linked to large, complex water systems, or cooling towers like those found in hospitals, hotels, and cruise ships

I can cause severe illness in those with risk factors such as cancer, chronic heart disease, lung, kidney, or liver disease, suppressed immunity, individuals over 50 years old and those staying in poorly maintained accommodation



IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ME CALL YOUR GP OR 111 FOR ADVICE

Tuberculosis



Who am I?

I am a bacterium known as mycobacterium tuberculosis or TB.

How do you catch me?

I spread in the air in droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. When a person breathes me in, I settle in the lungs and begin to grow. From there, I can move in the blood to other parts of the body, such as the lymph nodes, abdomen, bones or brain.

How do you know it's me? I can cause...



An ongoing cough, lasting more than 3 weeks, sometimes with phlegm or blood.



High temp.



Weight loss or loss of appetite.



Night sweats.



Tiredness and fatigue.

I can also cause symptoms in other parts of the body – these depend on the area affected.

What to do about me?

- If you think you have me, especially if you have travelled to a country where TB rates are high, see your GP.
- You will need treatment with a 6 month course of antibiotics. It is important not to miss any doses and complete the course of antibiotics, otherwise I get stronger, develop resistance and become very difficult to treat.
- If I am in the lungs you will need to isolate at home for 2 weeks to avoid me spreading to others. Close contacts will also need to be screened and may need to receive antibiotics.

Key facts:

I am currently the second leading infectious disease killer after COVID-19 worldwide

Rates of TB in London are high, more than double the UK average

The BCG vaccine is given to children living in areas where I cause high rates of infection, or those people who frequently travel to countries where I am common.
Note: BCG does not always protect people from getting me

Approximately one quarter of the world's population is infected with me, called latent TB. People with latent TB show no symptoms and cannot spread me. There is a 5-10% lifetime risk that latent TB could become active later, particularly if your immune system becomes weakened

 **IF YOU HAVE A COUGH THAT LASTS MORE THAN 3 WEEKS OR YOU COUGH UP BLOOD, SEE YOUR GP**