

— A NURSE'S GUIDE TO — HOW PATHOGENS SPREAD



Microbes haunt the hallways and exam rooms in healthcare settings everywhere. There's no way to entirely avoid them, but here's an idea of what you're up against.

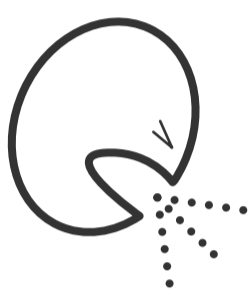
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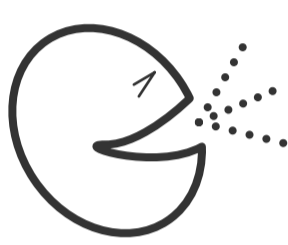
CERTAINTY
Be safe. Be smart. Be certain.

AIRBORNE VS. CONTACT DISEASES

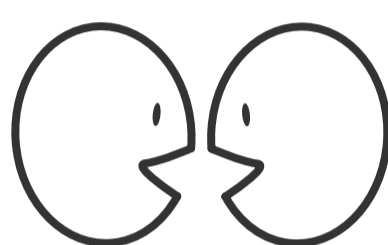
Airborne diseases are spread via:



• **Coughing, sneezing**



• **Laughing**

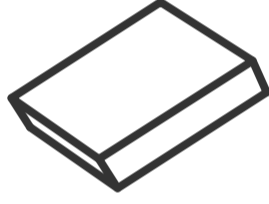


• **Close personal contact**

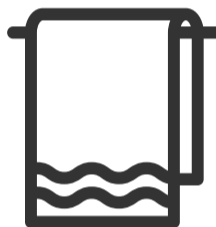
Contact Diseases are transmitted through:



• **Direct bodily contact**



• **Non-disinfected hard surfaces**



• **Soft surfaces housing microbes**

How Long Can You Hold Your Breath?

The cough or sneeze of an infected measles or flu patient can contaminate an airspace for several hours before settling onto surfaces.

Germs Are Getting Tougher

Hospital acquired infections are common and increasingly difficult to fight. Many types of bacteria are now drug-resistant—which puts patients at even greater risk.

- **VRE**
- **VRSA**
- **MRSA**
- **MDR-TB**

Why We Wash Our Hands So Much

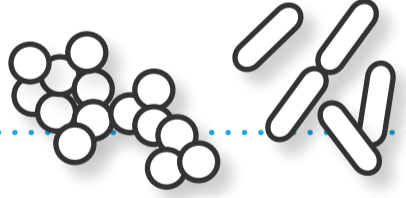
Many forms of bacteria are spread by hand via surfaces such as bed rails, doorknobs and bedside tables that are touched frequently. That's often how Klebsiella, Acinetobactor, and other bacteria get on medical devices such as ventilators and IV catheters, causing serious illness in vulnerable patients.



WHICH MICROBES ARE MOST DIFFICULT TO SCRUB OUT?

Staph and Salmonella

TOUGH

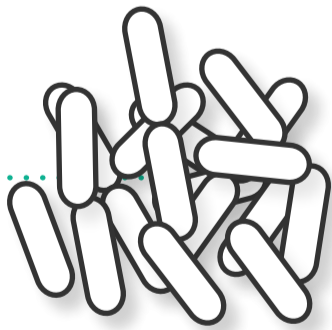


HOW TO KILL THEM

General disinfectant

Pseudomonas aeruginosa

TOUGHER

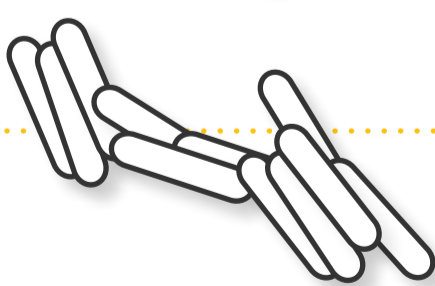


HOW TO KILL IT

Hospital disinfectant

Mycobacterium tuberculosis

TOUGHEST



HOW TO KILL IT

Tuberculocidal disinfectant

How to Keep Germs at Bay

- Practice good hand washing and overall hygiene
- Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Use proper disinfection and sterilization protocols
- Regularly clean commonly touched surfaces

Resources

- <http://www.cdc.gov>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>
- <http://www.ciriscience.org>
- <http://www.aidsmap.com>
- <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca>
- <http://www.maine.gov>