

GCSE Biology – Different Types of Disease - Transcript

Like any organism, the human body can be affected by many different types of disease. However, there are things we can do to try and stay healthy.

The World Health Organisation defines health as: “...a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease...”

This means mental health is just as important as physical health, but both can influence each other. Our health can be affected by diet, exercise, stress levels, and life situations.

It can also be affected by factors we can't control, like age, sex and our genes. A disease is a condition that affects an organism by stopping its organs, tissues or cells from working properly.

Some diseases are communicable, or infectious. This means they can be spread from one person to another and they're caused by pathogens, like bacteria, fungi, viruses or protists.

Examples of pathogens which cause infectious diseases are; the flu virus, malaria protist and the salmonella bacterium which can cause food poisoning.

There are various methods that can reduce the risk of different infectious diseases, such as washing our hands, vaccinations and controlling vectors, which are organisms that spread disease, the way mosquitos spread the malaria parasite.

Diseases can also be non-communicable. These ones can't be passed on.

Diabetes, cancer and heart disease are all examples of non-communicable diseases.

They may be caused by our genetics, our lifestyle or environmental factors. When these factors increase the likelihood of developing a disease, we call them risk factors. Sometimes one disease can make another worse.

So for example, if a disease lowers a person's immune system then they're more likely to suffer from infectious diseases. High stress and poor mental health can be a risk factor for certain diseases, just as severe physical illness can lead to depression and other mental health conditions.

So health can be affected by many factors such as diet, exercise, and even the environment we live in. It can also be impacted by different types of disease. Good health is a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being.