



Summary

A communicable disease is defined as an illness that arises from transmission of an infectious agent or its toxic product from an infected person, animal or reservoir to a susceptible host, either directly or indirectly through an intermediate plant or animal host, vector, or environment. Communicable diseases refer to diseases that can be transmitted and make people ill. They are caused by infective agents (pathogens) e.g. bacteria and viruses, which invade the body and multiply or release toxins to cause damages to normal body cells and their functions.

Apart from the infective agents, there are three other factors necessary for the occurrence of communicable diseases viz. source of infection (this refers to any environment, in which infective agents can live, parasitize and breed), mode of transmission (it could be through direct or indirect contact, droplet transmission, airborne transmission, common vectors, blood or body fluid transmission and congenital infection) and host (hosts refer to the susceptible population).

Communicable diseases are broadly classified into the following categories i.e. a) Enteric diseases b) Food borne diseases c) Waterborne diseases d) Blood-borne pathogen diseases and e) Sexually transmitted diseases. Preferably one can prevent communicable disease outbreaks by engaging the communities and ensuring early detection and alert.

Whereas, non-communicable diseases are those diseases which cannot be transmitted from one person to another. It can refer to chronic diseases which last for long periods of time and progress slowly. It can be classified into the following category- Cardiovascular disease, Cancer, Chronic respiratory disease, Diabetes, Chronic neurologic disorders, Musculoskeletal diseases and Unintentional injuries respectively. Further, NCDs can be controlled by reducing the behavioural risk factor thereby reducing the probability of the disease.