

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

For the purposes of GBEB the currently accepted medical definitions of chronic, communicable, contagious and infectious diseases will be used.

Examples of chronic, communicable, contagious and/or infectious diseases are:

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is caused by a virus, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which attacks the body's immune system, leaving victims especially vulnerable to infection. To date, there is no known cure. The mortality rate ranges between 70%-90% after two years. No identified cases are known to have been transmitted in the school or day-care setting or through casual person to person contact. The only known modes of transmission are sexual contact, neo-natal contact (birth), blood transfusions, and use of infected hypodermic needles. Research conducted indicates that although the HIV is present in saliva, there is no evidence that AIDS has been transmitted through saliva or other body fluids, except those referred to above. AIDS is not an easily transmitted disease.

CYTOMEGALOVIRUS, a member of the herpes family, and transmitted through secretions of body fluids. It is primarily a threat to pregnant women. The symptoms are similar to those of mononucleosis (fever, lethargy, headaches, aching muscles) and may sometime lead to CMV pneumonia.

HERPES SIMPLEX VIRUS, categorized as Type I and Type II. HSV-I occurs mainly in childhood and is transmitted orally by direct contact with infected secretions. HSV-II, also known as genital herpes, usually is transmitted through sexual contact.

Both types of herpes are evidenced by lesions on the infected person's body, including cold sores. The risk of transmission is greatest when the person has visible or active lesions. Hand washing and cleanliness are the best prevention. Chicken pox, shingles, and infectious mononucleosis are closely related to the herpes virus and can be transmitted through contact with infected bodily fluid.

HEPATITIS B, A viral infection of the liver with a variety of symptoms or no symptoms. It is transmitted by sexual contact, transfusion of blood or blood components, human bites, or contaminated hypodermic needles. Vaccines for active hepatitis B are available and an important preventive measure.

### **Additional Information:**

➤ **Short Duration:**

Acute communicable diseases are common childhood diseases such as chicken pox, mumps measles, TB, impetigo, conjunctivitis, ringworm, strep throat and scarlet fever.

➤ **Definitions:**

Lesions are open sores (i.e., cold sores, blisters) on the skin. They may or may not be communicable.

Secretions refers to all body fluids, such as saliva, blood, tears, urine, feces, and oozing lesions.

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