

Source: [KBiologyMasterIndex](#)

1 | Overview of Human Diseases

A lecture by Paul.

#flo #disorganized

Disease is an abnormal condition that causes impairment in/loss of function of an organism (a.k.a. decreased fitness) that is not due to immediate external injury.

- What causes human disease?
 - Infectious agents
 - Deficiency disorders
 - Heritable factors
 - Physiological disorders (immunodeficiency, autoimmune disorders, allergies, etc.)

1.1 | Congenital vs. Acquired disease

Congenital diseases => diseases present at birth due to DNA abnormalities / pregnancy pathological issues

Acquired diseases => diseases that begin during lifetime, including...

- Microorganism invasion => “infectious diseases”
- Autoimmune reaction
- Nutrient deficiency
- Mechanical wear
- Ingestion of noxious chemicals

Infectious diseases actually smaller on the causes of death in the US

- Heart disease => wear + deficiency
- Cancer => heritable + DNA
- Unintentional injuries => not a disease
- Chronic respiratory disease => wear
- Stroke => not a disease
- Alzheimer disease => wear
- Diabetes => autoimmune, nutrient, wear
- Influenza <= **here, finally, an infectious disease.**

1.2 | Disease causing agents

- **Protozoan** => single-celled eukaryotes
- **Fungal** => single/multi-celled eukaryotes
- **Bacteria** => single-celled prokaryotes
- **Viral** => acellular parasitic infectious agent
- **Helminths** => multicellular worms
- **Prions** => acellular misfolded proteins
- **Viroids** => infectious nucleic acids w/o protein coat to make virus

1.3 | Pathogenicity + Virulence

Pathogenicity => relative capacity to cause disease

- Non-pathogenic agents => no disease
- Primary pathogens => yes disease
- Opportunistic pathogens => yes disease only when it can, for instance, in immunocompromised individuals

Virulence => numerical measures for pathogenicity

- Measured experimentally with LD50 + ED50
-

1.4 | Overview of various diseases

1.4.1 | Protozoan

- **Protozoan factors** => direction pathogenesis leading to tissue damage
- **Host-mediated factors** => immune evasion + escape mechanisms