Infections

A. Fever

A medical student has made some language notes on a case report.

Case 45
A 24-year-old man presented with a **fever** which he had had for three days. On the third day he had had a severe attack of fever with sweating and **rigors**. The only past history of relevance was hepatitis four years earlier and **glandular fever** (infection with Epstein-Barr virus) at the age of 18 years. He had returned from Africa three weeks previously. Fever = pyrexia (also remember PUO-pyrexia of unknown origin) Fever also known as temperature- "I've got a temperature" Adjectives = feverish/febrile and pyrexial Opposites= afebrile/apyrexial Some symptoms of fever Sweating Rigors (severe shivering and sensation of coldness, also known as chills)

B. Microorganisms

Infections differ from other diseases in a number of aspects:

- Most importantly, they are caused by living microorganisms- such as viruses or bacteria that can usually be identified, thus establishing the etiology early in the illness. Many of these organisms, including all bacteria, are sensitive to antibiotics and most infections are potentially curable, unlike many non-infections degenerative and chronic diseases.
- Communicability is another factor which differentiates infections from non-infectious diseases. Transmission of pathogenic organisms to other people, directly or indirectly, may lead to an outbreak or epidemic.
- Finally, many infections are preventable by hygienic measures, by vaccines, (especially live attenuated vaccines such as rubella vaccine) or by drug prophylaxis (for example, chloroquine to prevent malaria)

Microorganisms include bacteria, viruses, fungi, protozoa (such as the parasite that causes malaria). Another general word for these pathogens is microbes. Patients often refer to microbes as germs or bugs.

Notice the common expressions for acquiring an infectious disease:

Could he have	caught picked up	some disease from the dog?	I think I've caught the flu bug that's going round.

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C. Source and spread of infection

Here is an extract from a medical textbook.

Infection may originate from the patient (endogenous), usually from skin, nasopharynx or bowel, or from outside sources (exogenous), often another person who may be either suffering from an infection or carrying a pathogenic microorganism. Carriers are usually healthy and may harbor the organism in the throat (for example diphtheria), bowel (salmonella), or blood (hepatitis B or HIV). Non-human sources of infection include water (e.g. cholera), milk (e.g. tuberculosis), food (e.g. botulism), animals (e.g. rabies), birds (e.g. psittacosis) and also the soil (e.g. legionella- Legionnaire's disease).

The incubation period is the period between the invasion of the tissues by pathogens and the appearance of clinical features of infection. The period of infectivity is the time that the patient is infectious to others.

Match the two parts of the sentences. Look at A, B and C to help you.

1 1988 saw the UK launch of live attenuated
2 Chickenpox (varicella) is a common infectious
3 Rabies has an incubation
4 The patient remained febrile
5 He was admitted with a four-day history of influenza-type symptoms of fever with
6 Quite a proportion of patients who recover from Hepatitis B
7 The central part of Africa is in the midst of an epidemic
8 Measles (rubeola) is most
9 Lyme disease is caused by transmission
10 PUO stands for

a.) period ranging from four days to many months.
b.) rigors, myalgia and general malaise.
c.) become carriers of the virus
d.) infectious during the catarrhal stage.
e.) disease of childhood
f.) of AIDS.
g.) of B. burgdorferi from animal to man by ixodid ticks.
h.) with peaks of temperature of 39.5 degrees celsius.
i.) pyrexia of unknown origin
j.) measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

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Complete the case report on the patient. Look at A, B and C above to help you.

Case 45
On examination, he looked unwell. His pulse rate was 100/minute. He had a palpable spleen. The combination of (1)_____ and (2)_____ in a patient who has recently returned from Africa strongly suggests a diagnosis of malaria. The (3) _____ period is usually 10-14 days. In this case, the patient admitted he had not been taking (4)_____ regularly. The diagnosis was confirmed by the presence of (5) _____ in his blood film.

Complete the sentences. Look at A, B and C above to help you.

1.) An infection which can be treated successfully with antibiotics is _____ .
2.) Another word for an epidemic is an_____.
3.) Bacteria and viruses are examples of _____.
4.) Someone whose temperature is normal is _____.
5.) The common infection with Epstein-Barr virus is known as_____.

Express your idea.

Cases of HIV infection reach record high in the UK
Describe the situation with regard to HIV in your country. What measures are being taken to control it?