

# [Bubonic plague](https://assignbuster.com/bubonic-plague/)

Bubonic Plague University of Phoenix Introduction to Health and Disease HCS 245 March 03, 2013 Bubonic Plague The bubonic plague seems to refer to an era long passed. Associated with the filthy living conditions of industrial Europe in the 14th century its beginnings are centuries prior in the Roman Empire. The Plague of Justinian is the first well documented pandemic of the bubonic plague and “ it killed up to 10, 000 people a day"(" Bubonic plague," n. d., 1). When the plague struck Asia and Europe “ an estimated 25 million people"(" Bubonic plague," n. d., 2) were killed. No specific races or ethnicities are more or less susceptible to the bubonic plague. Populations exposed to poor living conditions in overcrowded areas with little to no sanitation to remove waste are still at higher risk of contracting bubonic plague. Bubonic plague is a worldwide population risk. Describe the disease. Bubonic plague is a bacterial infection caused by Yersinia pestis. This disease attacks the lymph system, especially the groin and armpit areas, causing painful swelling to the affected areas. The swollen lymph nodes are called buboes, which the name bubonic plague is derived from. The disease can progress into septicemic plague, in the blood, and pneumonic plague, in the lungs. Describe the factors that make this particular population vulnerable to the disease. The worldwide population is vulnerable to this disease because if the disease gets to the pneumonic phase it is transmitted through the air and more people are infected. The bubonic plague is a very rapid disease with the beginning symptoms showing within seven to ten days of exposure. With the ease of modern transportation the ability for this disease to resurface are great. Describe environmental factors that make the population vulnerable to the disease. Environmental factors that make the world’s population vulnerable to bubonic plague continue to remain in poor countries that are not able to provide proper sanitation systems to remove waste. Rodent control is also an environmental factor that makes the world’s population vulnerable to bubonic plague. What are the modes of transmission? Bubonic plague is a zoonotic disease that mainly stays between small rodents and the fleas they carry. Zoonotic as defined by Webster’s Dictionary is “ a disease communicable from animals to humans under natural conditions"(" Definition," 2012, p. 1). When the fleas feed of the rodent, they contract the disease. When the rodent dies, the fleas must find a new host to feed off. When the fleas feed off the new rodent, the disease is then transmitted to the new rodent. This repetitive process happens quickly because the bubonic plague is a rapidly progressing disease and this causes the rapid spread of the disease in rodents. In large crowded populations, such as overcrowded cities, where rodents are prevalent among humans the fleas have the ease of moving to human hosts as the rodent population die off from the plague. This is how the disease is transmitted to humans. Humans can only transmit the disease to other humans if the disease has progressed to the pneumonic plague phase. In this phase the human has come down with pneumonia and the disease is spread thru airborne droplets from the coughing caused by the pneumonia. What methods are used to control the spread of the disease? When the bubonic plague first emerged in Roman Empire, the disease spread quickly between port cities because the diseased rodents migrated with the ships. As the population realized there was a problem cities started implementing laws that restricted the reentry back into a city if the person had traveled to a known infected city. Ships were hastily ran out of the port city to help stop the spread of the disease. These early attempts at isolation did little to stop the spread of the disease because the focus was on humans and not the rodents carrying the infected fleas. The disease spread rapidly. When the disease reemerged as a pandemic in Europe in the 14th century and the isolation, thought process had not changed much. The idea to send the infected person out of the city to a remote location did become a popular treatment option. This treatment did work initially for the person because they had been removed from the diseased population. As the disease progressed in the human to the pneumonic stage, the disease spread rapidly throughout the country because the disease is now airborne and can spread to more humans. The bubonic plague is still present in the modern world. Now it is up to physicians to make quick diagnoses to provide the patient fast treatment with strong antibiotics, oxygen, respiratory treatments to ease the difficulty of breathing, and intravenous fluids to maintain hydration. In a recent case of bubonic plague in Colorado Dr. Jennifer Snow’s quick thinking is credited with saving a 7-year-old girls life. According to ABC News, after hearing the child’s recent exposure to a rotting animal on a camping trip Dr. Snow “ reinterviewed the family"(Dolak & Patel, 2012, p. 1). Dr. Snow was then able to do some quick research and blood work to make her diagnosis so treatment could begin. Bubonic plague is very prevalent in third world countries where extremely poor living conditions and poor medical care keep the disease alive. Are there alternative methods used by the selected population for treatment? Currently the most effective treatment for bubonic plague is strong antibiotics. This has not always been the case. Centuries ago before the causes of bubonic plague were known, people created cures for the plague based on superstition. Smoking tobacco was thought to protect the people who were employed to collect the dead bodies. This thought was so widely accepted that school aged children were made to smoke. Some thought that wearing flowers in their nostrils would prevent the inhalation of the disease. Lucky charms became wide spread to ward off the disease. Money was a great alternative method of treatment. The wealthy could afford to pick up and move to a non-infected area leaving the poor behind to die of the plague. What are the effect of the alternate treatments? The effects of the alternate treatments are, and were, bogus. In the height of the Asian and European pandemic people were desperate for a cure and fell prey to charlatans looking to make money off someone’s bad fortune. Unfortunately, in that era, physicians did not have the resources or knowledge about the plague to treat it correctly. What role do social and/or cultural influences play in the disease for a particular population? Social influence of the bubonic plague eventually resulted in better sanitation for cities. Getting rid of waste and constant maintenance of the cities became a source of employment for some. The sanitation department was created. This also involved collection of the dead bodies and mass graves being utilized because of the high numbers of daily deaths. Also, the high number of deaths resulted in less people to do the jobs. The living started asking for higher wages because of the heavier workload. Employers refused to increase wages and rioting followed. Cultural influence came in art depicting skeletons and many dead people. In contrast, art reflected the works of the Church trying to help the afflicted. Plays and literature started talking about the dark side of life in the form of tragedies and dark humor. What are the effects of the populations’ beliefs and value have on treatment options? People’s beliefs in religion were tested during the pandemic. People were told to pray and that God would protect them. When this obviously did not protect people, they started to demand answers that the Church could not give them. The masses began to lose faith and question the existence of God. If God was supposed to be able to protect them then why was he not protecting them? Identify community health promotion and wellness strategies to help prevent the disease. Community health promotion started with the understanding that the overcrowding and unsanitary conditions of the poor and working class in the 14th century were a leading cause for the bubonic plague. Where there is filth, rotting food, and lack of sanitation there are rodents carrying fleas infected with the plague. When sanitation efforts began, the plague began to reside. As people began to figure out how the disease spread then isolation began with ships in port and removing infected people to remote locations. Conclusion Throughout the centuries, the bubonic plague has tormented the world’s population with recurrent episodes and mass causalities. Lack of knowledge and medicinal treatments lead to many treatments that did nothing to help the infected person. Bogus treatments became prevalent when nothing else worked. Sanitation and clean-up efforts help to control and stop the pandemic in Asia and Europe in the 14th century. This horrible disease is still very active in the world with most cases being in third world countries. The modern world is not immune to cases of bubonic plague but pandemics are, hopefully, an issue of the past. References Definition. (2012). In Merriam, & Webster (Eds.), . Retrieved from http://www. merriam-webster. com/dictionary/zoonotic Dolak, K., & Patel, M. D., C. 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