

COMMON TERMS R/T INFECTIOUS DISEASE (COMMUNICABLE DISEASE):

Aerosols: infectious viral particles that can float or drift around in the air. Aerosols are emitted by a person infected, even one with no symptoms— when they talk, breathe, cough or sneeze. Another person can breathe in these aerosols and become infected with the virus.

Antibodies: proteins made by the immune system to fight infection. If the antibodies later encounter the same infection, they help prevent illness by recognizing the microbe and preventing it from entering the cells.

Community spread (community spread): is said to have occurred when people have been infected without any knowledge of contact with someone who has the same infection.

Contact tracing: a process that begins with identifying everyone a person diagnosed with a given illness has been in contact with since they became contagious.

Epidemic: a disease outbreak in a community or region.

Flattening the curve: refers to the epidemic curve, a statistical chart used to visualize the number of new cases over a given period of time during a disease outbreak.

Herd immunity: occurs when enough people become immune to a disease to make its spread unlikely. As a result, the entire community is protected, even those who are not themselves immune.

Immunity: partial or complete protection from a specific infection because a person has either had that infection previously or has been vaccinated against it.

Incubation period: the period of time between exposure to an infection and when symptoms begin.

Long-haulers: people who have not fully recovered from COVID-19 weeks or even months after first experiencing symptoms.

Mutation: a change to a virus's genetic material that occurs when the virus is replicating.

Pandemic: a disease outbreak affecting large populations or a whole region, country, or continent.

Physical distancing: also called **social distancing**, refers to actions taken to stop or slow down the spread of a contagious disease.

SARS-CoV-2: short for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. SARS-CoV-2 is the official name for the virus responsible for COVID-19.

Social distancing: see **Physical distancing**.

Variant: a virus containing one or more mutations that make it different from a version of the virus that has been circulating.

Virus: a virus is the smallest of infectious microbes, smaller than bacteria or fungi.

