**Disease List (Alphabetical)**

**AIDS**
*Description:* Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This virus attacks the cells in the immune system making the organism unable to fight off other pathogens that may attack the body. Symptoms include fever, sweats (often at night), swollen glands, chills, weakness, and weight loss. AIDS patients may go up to 10 years without experiencing any symptoms.

*Diagnosis:* A person may also be diagnosed as having AIDS if they have a CD4 cell count below 200 cells/mm³.

**Asthma**
*Description:* Asthma is a disease that affects the lungs and the airways that deliver air to the lungs. It causes periodic attacks of wheezing and difficult breathing. An asthma attack occurs when the airways become inflamed in response to a stimulus, such as dust, mold, pets, exercise, or cold weather. However, some attacks start for no apparent reason. Usually found in childhood but some are not diagnosed with asthma until adulthood. During an episode a patient will experience tightness of the chest, difficulty breathing, and coughing.

*Diagnosis:* Diagnosis is done by listening to the lungs (for a wheezing sound), taking lung x-rays (looking for inflamed lungs) and performing allergen tests (for food and environmental allergens).

**Athlete’s Foot**
*Description:* A common fungal infection of the skin of the feet. The fungus may be contracted from public environments and then grows in the warm and moist environment usually between the toes, and can be difficult to cure. Athlete's foot causes scaling, flaking, and itching of the affected skin.

*Diagnosis:* Usually can be diagnosed by a visual inspection of the infected area. When this is not sufficient, a KOH test (potassium hydroxide) can be prepared. Also when needed a skin biopsy (a sample if tissue) can be examined.
**Cold**

*Description:* An illness caused by a viral infection located in the respiratory system. Once inside the human body, the cold virus multiplies and attacks the mucous membranes of the nose and throat causing the common effects of the cold (for example, cough, sore throat, runny nose or fever). Other symptoms include muscle aches, fatigue, headaches, shivering, and loss of appetite. Because the cold is caused by a virus it cannot be treated with an antibiotic.

*Diagnosis:* Since there are no tests available to diagnose this illness doctors must look for the common symptoms. Throat cultures can be taken to rule out any other infection.

**Diabetes**

*Description:* A disease that results in the glucose (sugar) level of the blood being higher than the normal range. It is caused by a person’s inability to either produce or use properly a natural chemical produced in the body called *insulin*. The higher level of blood sugar results in many disorders of the body, for example an increase in problems with circulation of blood. Other risk factors include poor diet and obesity. Diabetes can lead to kidney disease or heart disease or cause vision problems. Symptoms include frequent urination, increased thirst and hunger. Later symptoms include blurred vision and swelling of the extremities such as the feet.

*Diagnosis:* Diagnosed by taking plasma blood glucose tests or fasting glucose tests. Patients typically will score > 200 mg/dl plasma glucose or fasting glucose > 130 mg/dl. Patients will also experience frequent urination, loss of appetite, and high blood pressure.

**Flu**

*Description:* *Influenza*, commonly known as "the flu," is a highly contagious viral infection of the respiratory system. Influenza typically causes fever, muscle aches, chills, fever, sore throat, headache, fatigue, and a more severe cough than the common cold and usually lasts longer. The flu can lead to nausea and vomiting. Generally transferred thru the air by cough or sneeze.

*Diagnosis:* Doctors typically look for the common symptoms of the flu. Antibody tests and viral cultures can also show if a patient has influenza.
**Parkinson’s Disease**

*Description:* A disease of the nervous system that occurs when certain nerve cells in the brain stop functioning properly, affecting the muscular system. The major symptoms are severe shaking (tremors) and disabilities involving movement. Others include joint and muscle stiffness and impaired balance. At present, there is no cure for Parkinson's disease.

*Diagnosis:* There is no test for this disease so doctors are forced to diagnose based on symptoms, usually if a patient experiences tremors, slow movement and rigidity, and postural instability.

**Skin Cancer**

*Description:* A disease in which skin cells found in the outer layers of the skin becomes damaged, often showing a change in appearance of the skin such as a growth or a sore that doesn’t heal. Factors that can lead to skin cancer are damaging ultraviolet rays (UV) from the Sun or tanning beds and heredity.

*Diagnosis:* The best way to diagnose skin cancer is to take a biopsy of the concerned area to be examined under a microscope.

**Strep Throat**

*Description:* Strep throat is a contagious disease caused by bacterial infection. Strep throat symptoms include fever, pain, redness, and swelling of the throat and tonsils. Strep throat may produce mild or severe symptoms including sore throat, nausea, and vomiting. Strep throat is contagious and can be transferred by close contact with another person.

*Diagnosis:* Diagnosis includes examination of the symptoms and laboratory testing including RADT test (rapid antigen detecting test) or throat culture examination.