

2.4.1 Disease-Causing Microorganisms in Humans

Pathogens enter the body in many ways:

- through the air we breathe (common cold, influenza),
- through the food we eat (cholera),
- through the water we drink (cholera),
- through direct contact with the infected person (measles, chickenpox, smallpox) and
- through **carriers** such as insects (houseflies, mosquitoes) and animals (rats) for example, malaria is spread by female *Anopheles* mosquito and female *Aedes* mosquito is the carrier of dengue virus.

Spread (transmission) through air takes place in the case of common cold. When a person suffering from common cold sneezes (Fig. 2.13) or coughs, fine droplets of moisture carrying the microbe (which is a virus in this case) are spread in the air. The virus may enter the body of a healthy person through the breathing process.

What can be done to prevent the spread of the pathogen?

Always keep a handkerchief or a piece of cloth close to your nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing.