

# Our Journey with Germs

## Education Pack



ROYAL COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS AND  
SURGEONS OF GLASGOW

# How much do you know about germs?

Our bodies are amazing machines that work hard to protect us from all sorts of dangers, including germs. In this education pack you will find videos and activities to teach you about germs, their history, and Glasgow's role in this fascinating story.

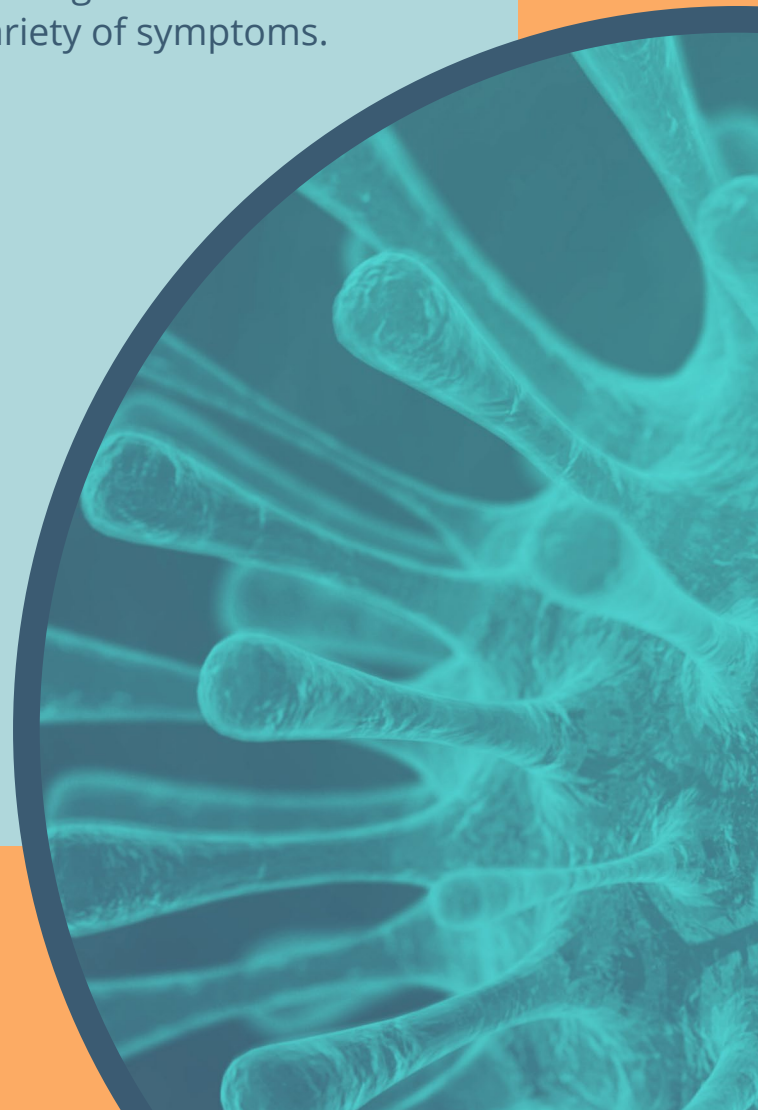
Let's get started with the first [video](#)!

Germs are micro-organisms, which means they are absolutely tiny! As mentioned in the video, some germs are beneficial to our bodies and can help us to digest the food that we eat. Other germs are more hazardous and can lead to diseases with a variety of symptoms.

## Invent a Germ!

Invent your own custom germ to present to the class.

- Get into small groups of 3 or 4.
- Grab a piece of poster paper and plenty of pens.
- As a group, invent a germ. Give it a name and tell us how it affects the body.
- Get creative! Draw pictures, write poems, or even a song about your germ.



# Victorian Glasgow and Hygiene

The second [video](#) will take you through the state of Glasgow during a critical time in medical history. Let's set the scene...

During the 1800s, Glasgow was changing from a small town to a growing city. A population increase led to the development of the Glasgow slums, with several families living in the same small space.

The streets were dirty and so were the hospitals- they often had to be demolished to get rid of germs.



## Discuss!

The second activity will get you thinking about cleanliness.

- In your small groups, discuss why cleanliness is important in hospitals.
- How might dirty spaces affect doctors and staff?
- How might it affect patients?
- Have someone in your group report back to the class and see what other groups came up with.

It's time for Joseph Lister to enter the story! Let's watch the last [video](#).

Lister is the reason why doctors care so much about cleanliness when treating patients. He was the person to discover that germs could enter the body and cause a lot of harm.

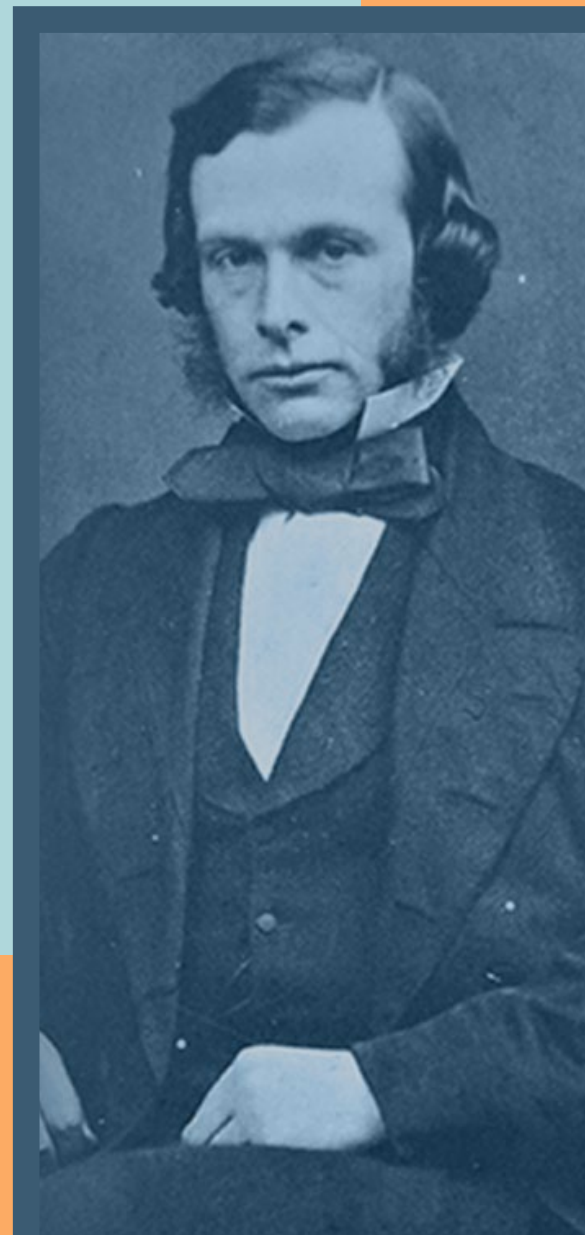
His discovery of antiseptics changed medicine and surgery for the better, and it all started in Glasgow! That's certainly something to be proud of.

Stopping the spread of germs is just as important today as it was then. Hospital workers wear protective gear- labcoats, gloves, and masks- to keep others safe. We should do our part too to keep germs at bay!

## Suit Up!

It's time to put your speed to the test...

- You will now find a series of items at your tables; a labcoat, some masks, and some gloves.
- Each of you will take a turn to put on these items as quickly as possible.
- The fastest of each group will then battle it out to crown the overall winner!



# Enter Mr Lister

# Word Bank

## **Antisepsis**

The use of chemicals to kill disease-causing germs.

## **Asepsis**

The absence of harmful germs and the methods used to achieve this.

## **Cleanliness**

The process of keeping something clean.

## **Germ**

A tiny living organism that can cause disease.

## **Hazardous**

Dangerous. A risk to someone's health.

## **Microrganism**

An organism that can only be seen when using a microscope.

## **Symptom**

A physical sign that characterises a medical condition or disease.

## **Slums**

Overcrowded tenement flats where several families lived in one room.