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were stunned by what they found. They were not used to influenza having such a dramatic and even fatal effect on people.

This pattern of death was very uncommon for the influenza that those doctors knew. Influenza is normally a killer of the elderly and young children. Now though, it was starting to hit people in the prime age of life. For 15-34 year olds, the rates of contracting influenza and pneumonia were 20 times higher in 1918 than in previous years. Eventually 28% of all Americans were infected and the mortality rate was 2.5% which was very high compared to

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"Contagious diseases and their effect on human kind.", University/Medicine and Dentistry/Medicine/Clinical Medicine, 2004-03-18

the exchange of body fluids and the transfusion of contaminated blood. This often occurs with the practice of unsafe safe or blood transfusions. The above diagram shows the growing pandemic of AIDS. HIV destroys the T4 helper cells which leaves the body susceptible to opportunist infections. In countries where there are little primary health care people succumb more to infections as they do not have the money for appropriate drugs. Another problem is that some religions and cultures do not believe in the practice of safe sex. An example of this is the statement the Vatican published earlier this year condemning the use of condoms. In catholic developing countries where Aids is a huge problem the situation can only get worse when safe sex is not practiced. Another pandemic was Spanish Influenza of 1918-1919 which killed more people than World War I, at somewhere between 20 and 40 million people. It has been cited as the most devastating epidemic in recorded world history. More people died of influenza in a single year than in four-years of the Black Death Bubonic Plague from 1347 to 1351. Known as "Spanish Flu" or "La Grippe" the influenza of 1918-1919 was a global disaster. The effect of the influenza epidemic was so severe that the average life span in the US was depressed by 10 years. The influenza virus had a profound virulence, with a mortality rate at 2.5% compared to the previous influenza epidemics, which were less than 0.1%. The death rate for 15 to 34-year-olds of influenza and pneumonia were 20 times higher in 1918 than in previous years. Kate Muir-Jones 1