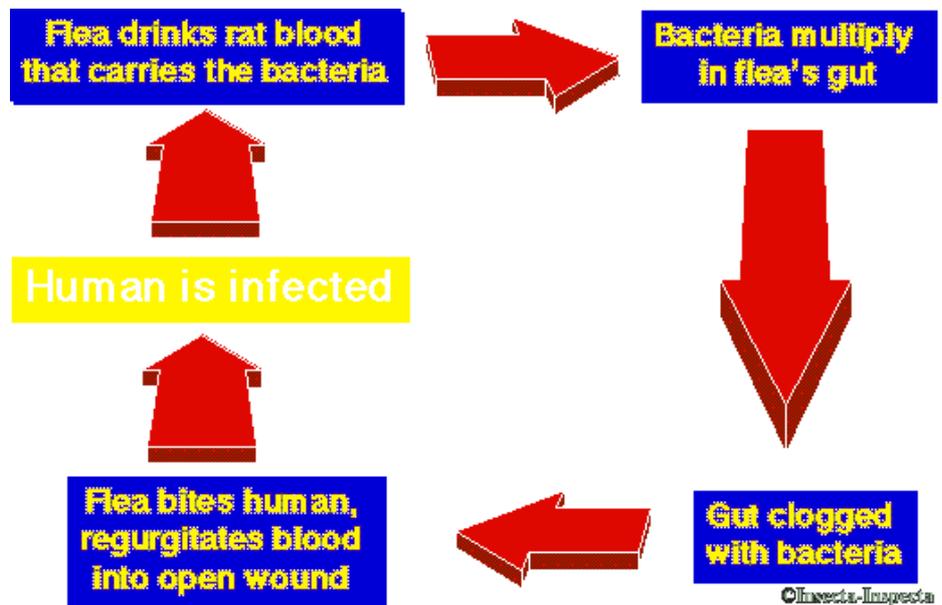


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How it was Transmitted



How was the Black Death transmitted? The three forms of the Black Death were transmitted two ways. The septicemic and bubonic plague were transmitted with direct contact with a flea, while the pneumonic plague was transmitted through airborne droplets of saliva coughed up by bubonic or septicemic infected humans.

The bubonic and septicemic plague were transmitted by the bite of an infected flea. Fleas, humans, and rats served as hosts for the disease. The bacteria (*Yersinia pestis*) multiplied inside the flea blocking the flea's stomach causing it to be very hungry. The flea would then start voraciously biting a host. Since the feeding tube to the stomach was blocked, the flea was unable to satisfy its hunger. As a result, it continued to feed in a frenzy. During the feeding process, infected blood carrying the plague bacteria, flowed into the human's wound. The plague bacteria now had a new host. The flea soon starved to death.

The pneumonic plague was transmitted differently than the other two forms. It was transmitted through droplets sprayed from the lungs and mouth of an infected person. In the droplets were the bacteria that caused the plague. The bacteria entered the lungs through the windpipe and started attacking the lungs and throat.