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dictionary

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Language



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ep·i·dem·ic  (ěp'ĩ-děm ĩk) also **ep·i·dem·i·cal** (-ĩ-kəl)

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adj.

1. Spreading rapidly and extensively by infection and affecting many individuals in an area or a population at the same time: *an epidemic outbreak of influenza.*
2. Widely prevalent: *epidemic discontent.*

n.

1. An outbreak of a contagious disease that spreads rapidly and widely.
2. A rapid spread, growth, or development: *an unemployment epidemic.*

[French *épidémique*, from *épidémie*, an epidemic, from Old French *espydymie*, from Medieval Latin *epidēmia*, from Greek *epidēmiā*, prevalence of an epidemic disease, from *epidēmos*, prevalent : *epi-*, *epi-* + *dēmos*, people; see **dā-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

ep'i·dem i·cal·ly *adv.*

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[Indo-European Roots](#)

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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