Reactivation of latent infection is the principal mechanism relating Toxoplasma gondii and Pneumocystis carinii to HIV. Less common is reactivation in Leishmania donovani, Trypanosoma cruzi, and microsporidian infections. An impaired primary immune response occurs in all these infections, and also with Cryptosporidium and Isospora belli. Association of HIV infection with gut parasites including Giardia lamblia and Entamoeba histolytica, and also with Trichomonas vaginalis infection is likely to be related to sexual modes of contact that favour both HIV and the parasite. The severity of malaria is not definitely associated with HIV, but Plasmodium falciparum infection may favour more rapid evolution of the HIV infection. Both malaria and trichomoniasis favour HIV transmission; the former by necessitating blood transfusion, and the latter by enhancing viral transmission during sexual contact.