

Bioterrorism is the purposeful release or use of a biological agent to cause serious illness and/or death in a large number of people.



Anthrax can be used in an act of Bioterrorism!

• Aerosolized spores of *B. anthracis* have the potential for use in biological warfare or bioterrorism.

What is Anthrax?

Anthrax is an infection caused by *Bacillus anthracis* that occurs primarily in agricultural settings



In the event of a biological attack in your area, what can you do to protect yourself ?

If you are in your house:

- ◆ Close immediately doors and windows. Cover your mouth and nose with 2-3 layers of cotton such as a towel or a t-shirt.
- ◆ Wash your hands with water and soap.
- ◆ Turn off air conditioner
- ◆ Contact your doctor if you notice any unexplained illness.

If you are in an open space:

- ◆ Immediately remove yourself from the area.
- ◆ Cover your nose/mouth and enter in a secure place.
- ◆ Follow the instructions given by the police / health authorities.

How can you report ?

Call 911, local law enforcement, or the health department if you think you have been exposed to any biological agent.



Category A Agents:

These are high-priority biological organisms that are most likely to be used in a bio-terrorism attack because they :

- Can be easily released in the air
- May spread easily from one person to another
- May result in many illnesses or deaths
- May cause many persons to be fearful or scared

List of Category A Diseases and Agents

- Smallpox (*Variola major*)
- Anthrax (*Bacillus anthracis*)
- Botulism (*Clostridium botulinum toxin*)
- Tularemia (*Francisella tularensis*)
- Viral Hemorrhagic Fever (*Ebola, Marburg*)
- Plague (*Yersinia pestis*)

Bioterrorism Guide to Anthrax



What the public should know !

*Miami-Dade County Health Department
8600 N.W. 17th Street
Miami, Florida*

*Telephone:
24 Hours A Day, 7 Days A Week:
(305) 470-5660
Fax: (305) 470-5533*



How can I catch Anthrax?

There is no person-to-person spread

Inhalational Route: by breathing anthrax spores from infected animal products (e.g. bio-terrorist release, wool sorting, etc.)

Digestive Route: by eating infected undercooked or raw meat or dairy products

Skin Route: bacteria penetrate skin

How long does it take to get sick after exposure?

- ◆ **Inhalational & Gastrointestinal (Digestive):** 1-7 days
- ◆ **Cutaneous (skin):** 1-12 days

How do I know that I have anthrax?

Initially, symptoms are not specific.

Inhalational: flu-like symptoms with sore throat, nausea, mild fever and muscle aches, followed by cough, chest discomfort, shortness of breath and tiredness

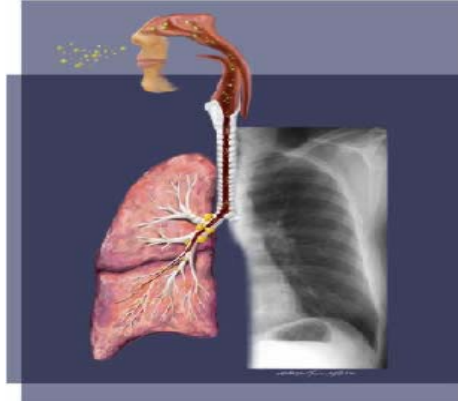
Cutaneous (skin): begins with a raised itchy bump that develops into a blister then a painless black ulcer

Gastrointestinal (digestive): begins with nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, and fever, followed by abdominal pain, vomiting of blood and severe diarrhea.

How can I protect myself from exposure to a suspected aerosol release of anthrax ?

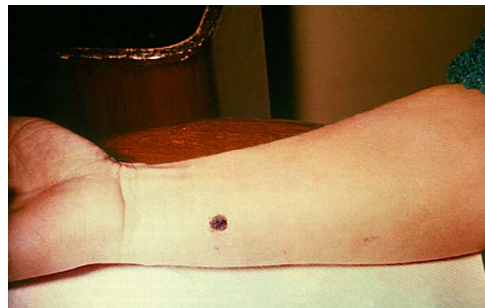
INHALED:

- Leave contaminated area immediately
- Cover mouth and nose with wet cloth or wear an N-95 respirator mask if available
- Wash body and clothes thoroughly with soap and hot water
- Begin antibiotic treatment within 24 hours of potential exposure



SKIN

Wash immediately with soap and water



Cutaneous Anthrax: 12-day lesion

How can I stop the infection from spreading?

- Wash hands with soap and water
- Wear gloves when helping sick person or handling his/her items
- Wear mask and eye protection (avoid splashes)

Do I need medications for anthrax exposure?

You may need to take antibiotics up to 60 days.

Can I die from Anthrax?

Inhalational anthrax is usually fatal.

Cutaneous anthrax is fatal in 20% of untreated cases

Gastrointestinal (digestive) anthrax is fatal in 25%-60% of cases

Is there a vaccine for anthrax?

The vaccine available for anthrax is not approved by the U.S. Federal and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in the general public. It can only be used under an Investigational New Drug (IND) protocol.

Who should I call if I know of an intentional anthrax release?

If you think that you may have been exposed to an intentional release of anthrax or any other biological agent, please, call 911 or your local law enforcement.

Also, contact your doctor for assessment of any unexplained illness and report incident to the health department.

