

Q: Should Ciprofloxacin be given to patients who suspect they may have been exposed to anthrax?

A: Public health officials and medical experts are discouraging the use of antibiotics in the absence of a credible threat. This “credible threat” is to be determined by the FBI and then confirmed as an exposure by the Cuyahoga County Department of Health.

Q: What are current recommendations for treating confirmed cases of Anthrax?

A: Report suspected infection or exposure to your local hospital infection control specialist and your local Public Health Department, or the Ohio Department of Health.

Inhalational anthrax:

Adults: Ciprofloxacin 400 mg IV q12h, initially IV, change to 500mg po bid when clinically appropriate; or, doxycycline 100 mg IV q12h, change to 100mg po bid; and, one or two additional antimicrobials. Treat for total 60 days.

Gastrointestinal and oropharyngeal anthrax:

Use regimens recommended for inhalation anthrax.

Cutaneous anthrax:

Adults: Ciprofloxacin 500mg po bid or doxycycline 100mg po bid for 60 days.

The AMC/NOMA is working closely with the Metropolitan Medical Response System and the County Emergency Management Agency as well as other organizations involved in addressing bioterrorism concerns.

For more information, visit our web site at www.amcnoma.org where you can read articles on bioterrorism and find links to other important web sites with current information.

For a complete listing of the AMC/NOMA’s public services, please call our Tel-Med line at 216-520-0200 and enter message #469. Tel-Med is a library of pre-recorded, physician-approved health messages. A detailed message on anthrax will be available shortly. For a free brochure listing all the Tel-Med messages, call the AMC/NOMA at 216-520-1000.



6000 Rockside Woods Blvd.
Suite 150
Cleveland, Ohio 44131-2352

216-520-1000
216-520-0999 fax



BIOTERRORISM

Frequently Asked Questions

The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland/Northern Ohio Medical Association has created this pamphlet to assist you in understanding current medical news regarding bioterrorism.

Additional information is available on our web site at www.amcnoma.org. The site is updated periodically as developments occur and also includes links to related agencies for further reference.

Q: What type of infection does Anthrax produce?

A: There are three types of Anthrax infection: skin, lung and gastro-intestinal.

Q: What are the signs and symptoms of each type of infection?

A: Skin: Occurs most frequently on the hands and forearms. It begins with papules (“pimples”) which develop into fluid-filled vesicles (“blisters”). These progress to coal-black scars (the word “anthrax” comes from a Greek word meaning “coal”).

Lung: Occurs from inhalation of spores. One to six days later fever, fatigue, and possibly cough and mild chest discomfort may occur. This progresses to rapid worsening of respiratory symptoms, sometimes after a short period of slight improvement.

Gastrointestinal: Follows eating insufficiently cooked contaminated food, usually meat, and can affect either the mouth (mouth ulcer, enlargement of lymph nodes in the neck) or the intestine (abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, bloody diarrhea.)

Q: What is the treatment for each type of infection?

A: Your doctor will determine the best treatment option upon evaluation. If you suspect infection, contact him/her at once, or go to the nearest emergency room. Do not take antibiotics unless directed to do so by your physician.

Q: What other bioterrorist infections should I watch for?

A: Though several are possible, smallpox infection is a primary concern and would have to be recognized early. Signs and symptoms develop 7 to 17 days after exposure, and include high fever, headache, backache and sometimes severe abdominal pain and confusion. A rash then develops that begins in the mouth and on the face, and spreads to the trunk, arms and legs. Within 1 to 2 days blisters appear.

Q: What should I do if I suspect smallpox infection?

A: The infected individual and anyone exposed to him/her should NOT leave the house. Contact your physician or the Public Health Department. Treatment will be provided, but quarantine is extremely important to prevent spread of the infection.

Q: Who should I contact if I suspect a bioterrorist infection (anthrax, smallpox, etc.) or other bioterrorist activity?

A: Suspected cases should be reported to your local County Public Health Department (in Cuyahoga County it is 216-443-7500), and/or the local FBI (Cleveland office: 216-522-1400.)

Q: What is being done locally to organize a community-wide response to bioterrorism?

A: Two agencies are working to develop such a response, and involve experts from several fields:

The **Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS)** is being funded through a federal grant to the city of Cleveland, through the Cleveland Department of Public Safety.

The **County Emergency Management Agency** is the local arm of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA.) This is administered through the Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Services (CECOMS.)

Q: What are the hospitals doing in preparation for biological attacks?

A: Hospitals are developing their own individual response plans, implemented under the direction of infectious disease specialists, the emergency department, medical staff, and hospital administration. This is being done in conjunction with recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and the Ohio Department of Health. ***Health care personnel and physicians should contact the infection control coordinator at their respective hospitals for more information.***