



## ANTHRAX

- Agent Information:** An aerobic, gram-positive, spore-forming bacteria that can cause cutaneous, pulmonary, or gastrointestinal infection, as well as meningitis or sepsis. Incubation is typically 1-7 days, but can be up to two months for pulmonary anthrax and 1-12 days for cutaneous anthrax.
- Transmission:** No person-to-person transmission. Only those directly exposed to the bacterium are at risk of infection.
- Signs and Symptoms:** Pulmonary anthrax begins as a severe influenza-like illness (ILI) for 2-3 days with prominent symptoms of cough and chest pain to help distinguish from influenza. There is a brief period of improvement followed by rapid deterioration due to the production of toxin. Cutaneous anthrax begins as a papular lesion that progresses to a vesicular stage and then develops an eschar center.
- Protective Measures:** Follow appropriate Body Substance Isolation (BSI) precautions. (If concerns exist about other agents or a mixed release, may recommend PPE). Victims immediately exposed require decontamination of spores.
- Decontamination of PPE and equipment:** Equipment can be decontaminated using soap, water, and 0.5 percent hypochlorite solution (one part household bleach to 10 parts water). This solution can be used as appropriate or if gear had any visible contamination. Note that bleach may damage some types of firefighter turnout gear (one reason why it should not be used for biological agent response actions). After taking off gear, response workers should shower using copious quantities of soap and water.
- Prophylaxis:** **For exposed but asymptomatic:** These patients should be provided with Doxycycline or Ciprofloxacin for 60 days.
- Treatment:** **For those with possible signs of illness:** Inpatient treatment with IV antibiotics until diagnosis can be confirmed.
- Reporting:** Any suspect cases should be reported immediately to the Division of Public Health, Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology: 1-888-295-5156.  
For additional information, visit the CDC website:  
[www.cdc.gov/anthrax/](http://www.cdc.gov/anthrax/).

**24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156**

Revised: 04/2018

Page 1 of 1