

What is Anthrax?

*Anthrax is an infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*. It can appear as a crystalline or powdery substance that may or may not be seen.*

Bacillus anthracis is an age-old bacterium that has caused disease for centuries in our world. Typically, infection comes from contact with anthrax-infected animals or infected animal products. The spores are found widely in soil; therefore, animals that feed on the ground tend to be those most likely infected. These animals usually include cows, sheep and goats.

Most commonly, infected people have been exposed through their work such as farmers, veterinarians and butchers.

Emergency Preparedness

We believe that all-hazards planning is your best defense to any emergency. Take these steps to keep you and your family well prepared:

- Develop an emergency plan.
- Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- Store a three day supply of non-perishable food for each person and pet.
- Store a three day supply of medications for each family member.
- Assemble a first aid kit.
- Keep extra clothing and hard-soled shoes in an easily accessible location.
- Assemble various emergency supplies such as: portable radio, flashlight, batteries, whistle, gloves.



**Kitsap County
Department of Emergency
Management**

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**ANTHRAX:
Take
Precautions,
But Don't
Panic**



Kitsap County

Department of Emergency Management
Bremerton-Kitsap County Health District

Infection

Humans can contract one of three forms of *Bacillus anthracis* (Anthrax): cutaneous (skin), intestinal and respiratory. Anthrax is very rare in humans and cannot be transmitted from person to person.

Symptoms vary depending on exposure but can include cold and flu-like symptoms. Doctors can prescribe antibiotics for treatment of the disease. To be effective, treatment should be initiated early. If left untreated, the disease can be fatal.

Suspicious Packages



Anthrax has typically been delivered to high-profile people or organizations.

Knowing what to look for can put you at ease and allow law enforcement personnel to deal with the most suspicious or potentially dangerous threats.

Characteristics of a Suspicious Package

- Stains on Wrapping
- Excessive Postage
- No Return Address
- Strange Odor
- Rigid or Bulky
- Misspelled Words
- Addressed to Title Only
- Badly Typed or Handwritten
- Restrictive Markings like "Confidential" or "Personal"
- Lopsided/Protruding item

Why Would I Receive Anthrax?

If you receive a strange looking package or envelope, ask yourself the following questions:

- Would someone want to hurt me at my home or work?
- Do I work for a governmental agency or other high-profiled organization?
- Is there a note inside the package that leads me to believe there is a harmful substance contained inside? For example, "You have just received Anthrax!"

If you answer YES to the questions listed above, call 911. Emergency Response personnel will investigate.

Using gloves, place the item in a clear plastic self-sealing bag such as a Ziplock. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

If you answer NO to the questions listed above, place the item in a plastic bag and throw it away in the trash. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

If Concerned, Glove-Up

Protect Yourself

Healthcare professionals around the nation know that gloves serve as a protective barrier between them and an article that is potentially harmful.



If you believe you could come ... contact with an unknown substance, it is wise to put on gloves for protection. If you don't have gloves, consider using a plastic bag to protect your hands.

After handling any unknown substance, always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

Wash Thoroughly

According to the Centers for Disease Control, hand washing is defined as a vigorous, brief rubbing together of all surfaces of lathered hands, followed by rinsing under a stream of water. Clean hands are the best defense against spreading illness.

Emergency Preparedness Information

Call the Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management at 616-5870.