

Anthrax Information Sheet - (Interim Treatment)

(Updated 01/09/02)

You have experienced a possible exposure to anthrax. At the moment, we do not have enough accurate information about the risk of exposure based on the history you provided and the information provided by the authorities to be certain that you were not exposed. In the absence of better information, we have elected to recommend that you begin antibiotic therapy to prevent the development of symptomatic anthrax.

We have provided you with a two-week prescription for antibiotics. If subsequent information becomes available that indicates you had no exposure to inhaled anthrax, the antibiotics can be discontinued. If subsequent information indicates that you were exposed to anthrax, you will need to continue the antibiotics for an additional 46 days.

If cultures or other tests for anthrax were performed and become positive, you will be notified immediately by one of our medical staff. If an environmental agent was tested, you will be notified of the results by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

We believe that the antibiotics prescribed to you for anthrax prevention should be effective if you take them as prescribed. However, during this period of time, you should be watchful for symptoms of anthrax. You should go to the Emergency Department if you experience any shortness of breath, fever/chills, a new rash, severe muscle aches, nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps, or other health symptom of significant concern. Skin infection with anthrax develops over days to weeks. It starts with a red spot, then raised bump, followed by formation of a blister which eventually turns black in the center.

For more information on anthrax and current guidelines, see the following websites: CDC website at www.bt.cdc.gov/; Stanford University Medical Centers website at www.bioterrorism.stanfordhospital.com/; or Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Website at www.bioterrorism.lpch.org/; or Santa Clara County Public Health Department at www.sccphd.org/

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