

HOW CAN ANTHRAX BE PREVENTED?

Humans

- Do not eat carcasses of animals which died of unknown causes and do not remove their skin, horns or other parts.
- Avoid direct contact with a carcass of an animal suspected to have died of anthrax.
- Always wear protective clothing when handling e.g. when it is buried or burnt.
- Contacts, even if not ill, need to be taken to nearest health care facility for management.

Animals

- Do not cut open carcasses of animals suspected of dying from anthrax.
- Bury these carcasses at a depth of at least 2 meters and treat the soil liberally with chloride of lime.
- Report suspected animals **immediately** to the nearest animal health technician or state veterinarian.



“Vaccinate livestock annually against anthrax”

HOW CAN ANTHRAX BE CURED?

Anthrax can be treated and cured if you consult your health care facility immediately.

Antibiotics are used to treat anthrax. In most cases, early treatment with antibiotics can cure cutaneous anthrax. Gastrointestinal and inhalation anthrax are more serious and can result in death easily. If left untreated any form of anthrax can result in death.

Remember to consult your nearest clinic or doctor immediately if you suspect that you have anthrax or have been exposed to anthrax.

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ANTHRAX

**AN ANIMAL DISEASE
THAT CAN ENDANGER
YOUR LIFE.**



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

WHAT IS ANTHRAX?

Anthrax is a highly contagious disease of domestic and wild animals, which can affect humans.

The disease is caused by *Bacillus anthracis*, an organism that forms spores which can lie dormant (asleep) but may come to life under the right conditions.

HOW DO YOU GET ANTHRAX?

Humans commonly get anthrax by handling infected animals or their products. Anthrax can also be acquired through inhalation of anthrax spores or by eating meat of infected animals.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ANTHRAX?

Humans

- **Skin (Cutaneous) Anthrax:** Small sore that develops into a blister. The blister then develops into a skin ulcer with a black area in the center. The sore, blister and ulcer are painless. The area surrounding the sore commonly becomes very swollen.



An Anthrax infected human skin

- **Digestive (Gastrointestinal) Anthrax:** Nausea, loss of appetite, bloody diarrhea, and fever, followed by severe stomach pain.
- **Lungs (Inhalation) Anthrax:** Fever, chills, sweating, fatigue, physical discomfort, headache, cough, shortness of breath, and chest pain and eventually shock.

Animals

- Sudden death of animal within a few hours without showing any signs of illness.
- Blood-stained discharge from nostrils, mouth and anus.
- Fever.
- Difficult breathing and /or swelling of organs.
- Muscle tremors and redness of the mucous membranes may be observed.

HOW SOON DO INFECTED PEOPLE GET SICK?

Symptoms can appear within seven days of coming into contact with the bacterium for all three types of anthrax. For inhalation anthrax, symptoms can also take up to 42 days to appear.

Consult your nearest health facility immediately when anthrax is suspected