



FAQS ON ANTHRAX

What is Anthrax?

Anthrax is a serious infectious disease caused by gram-positive, rod-shaped bacteria known as *Bacillus anthracis*. It occurs naturally in soil and commonly affects domestic and wild animals around the world. People can get sick with anthrax if they come in contact with infected animals or contaminated animal products. Anthrax can cause severe illness in both humans and animals.

How people get infected with anthrax

People get infected with anthrax when spores get into the body. When anthrax spores get inside the body, they can be “activated.” The bacteria can then multiply, spread out in the body, produce toxins, and cause severe illness.

This can happen when people breathe in spores, eat food or drink water contaminated with spores, or get spores in a cut or scrape on the skin.

Anthrax is not contagious, which means you can't catch it from another person like the cold or flu.

How animals get infected with anthrax

Domestic and wild animals can become infected when they breathe in or ingest spores contaminated soil, plants, or water.

These animals can include cattle, sheep, goats, antelope, and deer. In areas where domestic animals have had anthrax in the past, routine (yearly) vaccination can help prevent outbreaks.

Food safety tips on preventing anthrax.

1. Do not eat raw or undercooked meat from infected animals that are not inspected prior to slaughter. Anthrax is a zoonotic disease (animal to man) and can be spread on contact with contaminated meat. Avoid touching dead cattle that show signs of blood oozing out of the nostril, mouth, or anus.
2. Ensure meat is thoroughly cooked since normal cooking procedures and common disinfection methods easily kill vegetative forms of *Bacillus anthracis*.
3. However, it must be noted that anthrax spores, on the other hand, are highly resistant to heat, dryness, deep freezing, and common drinking water chlorination and are extremely resistant to disinfectants. Hence buy meat from sources that have gone through veterinary inspection or a trusted vendor.
4. Always employ Good Hand washing Practices using antibacterial soap

5. Adhere to Good Hygiene Practices including:
 - Avoid putting your fingers in your eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - Cover all exposed skin with clothing.