

## FACT SHEET – *Anthrax*

### ANTHRAX IS A DISEASE

- It is rare in the United States.
- The germ usually lives in the soil and can live there for many years.
- Warm-blooded animals like sheep and goats can get anthrax.
- The disease occurs almost anywhere in the world.

### *ANTHRAX IS ONLY RARELY PASSED FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER*

### HUMANS CAN GET ANTHRAX

- By breathing in the bacteria
  - Sickness starts within a week with symptoms like a cold.
  - Breathing can become very difficult.
- Through broken skin from handling parts of animals such as hides that had the disease
  - Sickness starts with an itchy rash.
  - It turns into a painless sore with a black center.
  - There may be swelling near the site of infection.
- By eating poorly cooked meat from animals that had the disease (this is rare)
  - Sickness starts with loss of appetite, vomiting, and fever.
  - Symptoms get worse (pain, vomiting blood, severe diarrhea).

### ANTHRAX CAN BE TREATED

- Some antibiotics can cure the disease.
  - Treatment works best if it begins soon after exposure.
  - If the germs are breathed in, treatment should start before sickness begins.
- There is a vaccine to prevent the disease. Now it is given to people who
  - have been exposed to anthrax
  - study the disease
  - are in the military

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services  
Frankfort, KY

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/preparedness>

Kentucky Regional Poison Center  
Louisville, KY

**EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222**

<http://www.krpc.com>

Lake Cumberland District Health Dept.  
**(606) 678 – 4761**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA

**Toll free: 1-800-311-3435**

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax>