

EpiX Posting: CDC Recommendations on Prophylaxis for Workers and Visitors to the Washington DC Processing and Distribution Center, 900 Brentwood Road and the Mail Handling Center, Cargo Rd., Anne Arundel County

All employees of and visitors to the Washington D.C. Processing and Distribution Center, 900 Brentwood Road, Washington DC and the Mail Handling Center, Cargo Rd, Anne Arundel County near BWI **since October 10th** should initiate antibiotic prophylaxis for possible anthrax exposure since it is believed that these individuals could have been exposed to the bacteria. These individuals should receive prophylaxis for 10 days with continuation as determined by the Washington D.C. health departments, and Maryland and Virginia State Health departments. These individuals should not be tested for exposure to anthrax with nasal swabs. Nasal swabs are used primarily for epidemiological investigation and not for individual diagnosis, prophylaxis, or treatment.

The Deputy Postmaster General is currently contacting employees to initiate prophylaxis. Persons who meet the criteria for potential risk and are currently outside of the Washington, DC metro area should contact their local State Health Department to receive antibiotic prophylaxis.

The CDC requests that state health departments assist in facilitating access to antibiotic prophylaxis if they are contacted. A system for logging and tracking those individuals should be initiated so that individuals may be followed for the development of signs and symptoms consistent with Anthrax. The D C Department of Health has set up a call center at (202) 442-9196 for treatment information for providers only. For general inquiries, call (202) 727-1000

Nasal swabs are not recommended for persons at potential risk who are currently out of the Washington, DC, metro area. Such tests are most useful for focusing epidemiological investigations, but are not used to determine the need for prophylaxis in potentially exposed persons.

State Health Departments may contact CDC at (404) 639-5077 or (404) 639-5076 to report names and contact information of persons determined to be at potential risk who are currently out of the Washington, DC, metro area.

The CDC investigation is on-going. Future modifications to these recommendations may occur based on epidemiologic and laboratory information. Any new modifications or new information will be posted.