

Bi terrorism: biological warfare and public health nursing

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



What is bioterrorism and how might you prepare for its effects? Bioterrorism uses pathogenic biological agents, such as biological warfare agents, which are colorless, and odorless derived from microorganisms that can be spread in the air as aerosols or placed into food or drink to infect as many people as possible. The agents are concealed easily and said to be difficult to detect. Terrorists tend to attack major cities or densely crowded areas, and government buildings (Nicolson, 2001).

One such agent that was used as early as 1520 by Cortez as an assault on the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan in Mexico was the smallpox virus. The American Government used this weapon during the wars with the Native Americans. The United States has eradicated the disease with vaccines over the many years (Graber, 2010). The latest known agent that imploded on the communities was the Anthrax virus, which was known to be in affect since 2001.

Some people would actually take the agent and put it in boxes, envelopes, etc. and send it in the mail to affect others with the disease. Nurses can help to be ready in different situations, by not only knowing about early warning signals of diseases, but to know how to deal with the terrorist attacks. Healthcare workers can review disaster plans in the workplace, be available as a first responder, review the evacuation plan, and help others to deal with the events that are taking place (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2008).

Nurses need the understanding of disaster plans in their workplace and community and review these plans every 6 months for changes and updates.

Planning for future outbreaks of disease is always a good idea, as we can never know when a disaster may strike.

References: Graber, M. (2010). TerrorismUpdates. Retrieved from <http://www.emedmag.com>. Nicolson, G. (2001). Bioterrorism. Retrieved from <http://www.immed.org>. Stanhope, M. , & Lancaster, J. (2008). PublicHealthNursing: Population Centered Health Care in the Community (7th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby, Inc.