

The twin towers and the pentagon



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The September 11 attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon heightened the fears all over the United States that sooner or later, a biological attack will again be launched by terrorists. The attack just indicates the vulnerability of the country and the magnitude of what can happen if terrorists decide to unleash a biologic agent. Among the biggest challenges posed to by the threat of bioterrorism are the inadequacy in terms of preparedness by local and national authorities in terms of emergency responses to a biological threat; and the possibility of early detection and availability of medical treatments in case of an actual bioterrorism threat. Since most attack will certainly be launched in secret and would likely go undetected for several days before its first victims develop signs and symptoms, many of those first exposed would have likely contaminated other people as they travelled and interacted with others.

Hence, the people who will probably respond first will not be the law enforcement agencies but health care professionals such as nurses and doctors who may not recognize that the diseases are the results of the biological attack such as anthrax, small pox or pneumonic plague. Certainly, the United States Health system is not equipped to detect and handle pathogens in case of biological attack. There may be ways in order to address the threat of bioterrorism. Primarily, the state leaders could increase its budget for defense to be spent on new detection technologies and medical treatments for those who are already contaminated with the pathogens of a biological attack.

Furthermore, scientists could develop a new technology that has sensors which will be placed in subways, malls and other public places that can

distinguish dangerous pathogens from others. The daunting task of fighting the threat of bioterrorism is not an easy feat. The United States is not yet fully equipped nor prepared to combat such threat. Officials still has to find and develop new technologies that will detect and combat any dangerous pathogens at the earliest possible time. Before that, we can only rely on manual detection and preparedness of everyone.