

## This Month:

### Bioterrorism, Disaster Education and Awareness Month

This event aims to educate individuals about being prepared for acts of bioterrorism. Since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 local health departments, health professionals and others have received questions from the public about the possibility of bioterrorism and ways to protect themselves. The following “frequently asked questions” were developed to answer some of those inquiries. For more information feel free to contact the GNR Emergency Preparedness Department.



Let us not look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but around in awareness.

~ James Thurber

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## Bioterrorism FAQs

### What is Bioterrorism?

Bioterrorism is a form of terrorism that involves the intentional release of germs (biological agents such as a bacteria or virus) into the environment. Some examples of biological agents are anthrax and smallpox. In the fall of 2001, an outbreak of anthrax occurred in the United States.

### What is GNR's role in bioterrorism preparedness and response?

GNR has been preparing for potential bioterrorism and continues to improve its ability to detect a bioterrorism event. GNR has been working with health care providers, public safety officials, and others throughout the region to develop effective plans. These plans includes steps to prevent further illness in an actual bioterrorist attack. GNR also conducts bioterrorism training for the local medical and public health community. Investigation and surveillance for bioterrorism events will be directed by GNR in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### Is there treatment if I am exposed to a biological agent?

For many biological agents, treatment is available. Different drugs must be used to treat different diseases. Therefore, if you think you may have been exposed to one of these germs, call 911 or your health care provider as soon as possible. Do not attempt to diagnose or medicate yourself.

### How can I tell if a letter or package is suspicious?

According to the FBI, you should look for certain indicators. For example, check the postmark to see if it was mailed from a foreign country. Also check for no return address and for restrictive markings such as “personal” or “confidential.” Look for misspelled words or incorrect title. Suspect letters or packages may be rigid or bulky and have excessive tape or string around them. They may exhibit a strange odor.

More [FAQs](#) and information on Bioterrorism.



FBI Poster (PDF)  
"Handling Suspicious Mail"

## Strategic National Stockpile

The federal government has stockpiled antibiotics for large-scale distribution in the event of a mass bioterrorist attack. Known as the [CDC's Strategic National Stockpile](#), it was designed to ensure the availability and rapid deployment of life-saving pharmaceuticals and antidotes.

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Please visit the [CDC](#) website for a list of preparation and planning resources specifically related to bioterrorism.

