

**REGION I EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDING MEDICAL ORDERS
BLS**

SMO: Anthrax -- Cutaneous

Revised Date:

Overview: The causative agent is Bacillus anthracis, an encapsulated, aerobic, gram positive spore-forming rod-shaped bacterium. Humans become infected by ingestion of spores from infected animals (e.g., sheep, goats or cattle), animal byproducts, such as hides or hairs, or an intentional malicious act of bioterrorism. All suspected cases of anthrax must be reported to the local department of public health and the Illinois Department of Public Health.

INFORMATION NEEDED

- Any recent exposure to sick goats, sheep or cattle
- Any recent exposure to animal byproducts, hides or hairs
- Suspected exposure to an intentional malicious act of bioterrorism

OBJECTIVE FINDINGS

- May be localized itching initially
- Usually 7 days post exposure, a painless papule will develop, which may resemble an insect or spider bite
- Within 1 to 2 days, the papule will enlarge and develop a central vesicle with surrounding non-pitting edema
- About 7 to 10 days after the initial papule formation, a painless central black scab or crust will appear

BLS

- Standard isolation from contact with the skin lesions
- Assess the patient for any other medical or trauma issues
- Vital signs
- Decrease contact with patient's skin as much as possible and use standard isolation techniques during all patient contact

Documentation of adherence to protocol:

- History related to the incident
- Appearance of any papules or black crusty scabs
- Measures taken to protect the patient, EMS personnel and personnel who will continue the care of the patient

Medical Control Contact Criteria

- Contact Medical Control if there is any suspicion of cutaneous anthrax exposure by the patient

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