

## Prepare an Emergency Kit

Prepare to meet the needs of a family member or friend who has specific needs. Prepare emergency kits for all emergencies with the following items:

- Two weeks supply of nonperishable food and manual can opener.
- Two weeks supply of water (one gallon of water per person, per day).
- Prescribed medication.
- First aid kit.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Portable, battery-powered radio or television with extra batteries.
- Flashlight with extra batteries.
- Matches in a waterproof container.
- Whistle, extra clothing and blankets.
- Tools and a map of the local area.
- Special needs items for infants, older adults, pets, etc.
- Sanitation and hygiene items (e.g. hand sanitizer, moist towelettes and toilet paper).
- Photocopies of identification and credit cards; cash and coins.
- Eyeglasses, contact lens and solution.
- Prepare a detailed emergency list including family, friends and doctor's names.

### Specific consideration for people with disabilities:

- Emergency plan/kit specific to your unique needs.
- Extra eyeglasses, batteries, hearing aid and mobility aid.
- Prepare a list of important information, including a list of prescribed medication, dosage, special equipment and instructions.

## Resources

### County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health ACCESS CENTER HOTLINE

1-800-854-7771

562-651-2549 TDD/TTY

(Available 24/7 including holidays)

### County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health 1-800-427-8700 or [ph.lacounty.gov](http://ph.lacounty.gov)

### County of Los Angeles Community and Senior Services 213-738-2600 or [dcss.co.la.ca.us](http://dcss.co.la.ca.us)

### Los Angeles City Department on Disability 213-202-2764 or 213-202-2755 TTY or [lacity.org/dod](http://lacity.org/dod)

### County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control 562-728-4882 or [animalcare.lacounty.gov](http://animalcare.lacounty.gov)

### County of Los Angeles Information Line Dial 211 or 211la.org

### Los Angeles City Information Line Dial 311 or [lacity.org/LAFD/311.htm](http://lacity.org/LAFD/311.htm)

### Emergency Survival Program [espfocus.org](http://espfocus.org)

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## County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health



## Anthrax Emergency



*Nurturing Hope, Promoting Wellness  
and Supporting Recovery*

## Emergency Outreach Bureau Disaster Services

550 South Vermont Avenue, 10th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
213-738-4919  
[dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov)

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Director**



### Mission Statement

Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.

### What Is an Anthrax Emergency?

Anthrax is an acute infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus Anthracis*.

It occurs most commonly in wild and domestic animals (e.g. cattle, sheep, goats, camels, antelope and other herbivores). However, it can also occur in humans when they are exposed to infected animals.

### How Can Exposure Occur?

#### Anthrax from Animals

Humans can become infected with anthrax by handling products from infected animals or by breathing in anthrax spores from infected animal products (e.g. wool, etc.). People can also become infected with gastrointestinal anthrax by eating undercooked infected meat.

#### Anthrax as a Weapon

The powder form of anthrax can be used as a weapon.



[emergency.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax](https://emergency.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax)

### Have You Been Exposed?

**Anthrax can be spread in three ways:**

#### Inhalation — Lungs

The initial symptoms of inhaling anthrax are like a common cold. After several days, the symptoms may progress to severe breathing problems and shock. Anthrax is usually fatal if inhaled and not treated immediately with antibiotics.

#### Gastrointestinal — Digestive

After consuming contaminated meat, you may experience acute nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, fever followed by abdominal pain, vomiting of blood and severe diarrhea. Symptoms may also include lesions and soreness in the throat, difficulty swallowing and marked swelling of the neck and regional lymph glands.

#### Cutaneous — Skin

The initial symptom is a small sore that develops into a blister, usually 1-3 centimeters in diameter. The blister then develops into a skin ulcer with a black area in the center. The sore, blister and ulcer do not hurt.

### Minimize Exposure

#### Treatment After Infection

Treatment is usually a 60-day course of antibiotics. Success depends on the type of anthrax and how soon treatment begins.

#### Prevention After Exposure

Treatment is different for a person who is exposed to anthrax but is not yet sick. Healthcare providers will use antibiotics (such as ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin, doxycycline or penicillin) combined with the anthrax vaccine to prevent anthrax infection.

#### Vaccination

There is a vaccine to prevent anthrax but it is not yet available for the general public. Anyone who may be exposed to anthrax, including certain members of the U.S. military, laboratory workers and workers who may enter or re-enter contaminated areas, may get the vaccine. In the event of an attack using anthrax as a weapon, people exposed would get the vaccine.

### Common Reactions

- Fear of invisible agent or of contamination
- Fear of dying, if contaminated
- Concern about the safety of the environment
- Anger at perpetrators or government
- Hopelessness and sadness
- Anxiety
- Sleep disturbance
- Social isolation or withdrawal

#### Resiliency

Successful coping is influenced by the extent to which you can accomplish the following:

- Identify emotional reactions to the fear of being contaminated that are predictable.
- Maintain a routine.
- Maintain contact with family and friends.
- Find ways to relax that do not include alcohol or drug use.
- Participate in activities you enjoy.
- Realize that you cannot control everything.
- Stay focused on personal strengths.
- Limit overexposure to media.
- Ask for emotional and medical assistance as needed.

#### Long-Term Impact

If you or a loved one have difficulty coping during this period of uncertainty, consider seeking professional help.

### Tips for Coping

#### Coping Strategies for Children and Teens

- Give honest age-appropriate information.
- Help them express their feelings.
- Encourage small children to express their feelings by drawing.
- Maintain parent, child and family routines and provide structure to their day.
- Limit media exposure to avoid unnecessary anxiety and fear.

#### Coping Strategies for Adults

- Remember that physical and emotional reactions to fear of being contaminated are normal.
- Focus on your strengths.
- Talk about your feelings.
- Become involved in the recovery process. Helping others heal can be beneficial to one's own recovery.
- Accept help from family, friends, co-workers and clergy.
- Make time for recreation and relaxation.

### Stay Informed

- Listen to the television and radio for instructions regarding evacuations, public health concerns and safe travel.
- If an evacuation is ordered, the announcement will include information regarding evacuation routes and shelter locations. Evacuate quickly and follow all instructions.
- If ordered to "shelter in place," stay in your current location (e.g. home, business, etc.) until ordered or permitted to leave.