



Anthrax

What is Anthrax?

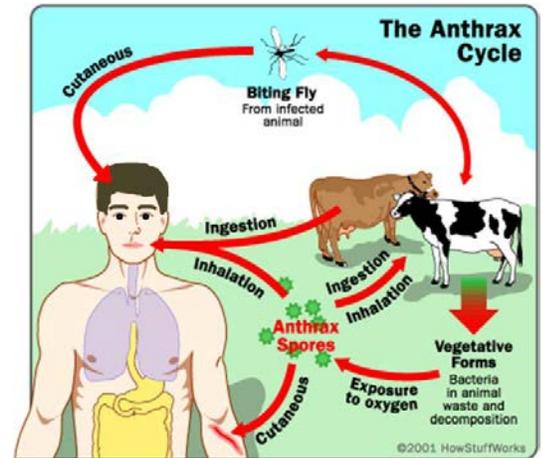
Anthrax is a dangerous disease of livestock caused by a bacteria found in the soil. This disease can cause sudden death in grazing animals (especially sheep and cattle) and result in serious economic losses to farmers. Anthrax can also cause disease in people, leading to death in serious cases.

How is Anthrax transmitted?

Anthrax bacteria contaminates the ground when an affected animal dies and is left to decompose. Other animals become infected when they graze in areas containing the bacteria.

People can become infected with anthrax in 3 major ways:

1. **INHALATION** - breathing in bacterial spores from dust
2. **INGESTION** - eating meat of an infected animal that contains the bacteria
3. **CUTANEOUS** - exposure to bacteria at the site of an open wound or from the bite of an insect that has previously fed on an infected animal



What are the signs of Anthrax in animals?

Affected animals often die suddenly, without showing any other signs of disease. This is especially true in cattle. However, in some cases, a sick animal may have the following symptoms for a short time before they die:

- Drowsiness
- Trembling and/or Convulsions
- Difficult Breathing
- Staggering

Affected animals do not ruminate and may show signs of bloat. Milk production is reduced in lactating animals and abortion can occur in pregnant animals. If animals are found dead unexpectedly, a good indication of anthrax is the presence of unclotted blood at their nostrils or mouth.

What can we do to control Anthrax in animals?

A reliable vaccine is available to prevent anthrax. The best way to protect livestock is to vaccinate animals before they get the disease!

Animals that die from Anthrax should not be butchered or cut open – carcasses should be buried deep in the ground or burned whole to destroy the bacteria (which can survive in the soil for many years).

CAUTION: People can become sick and even die of Anthrax from consuming meat from animals that have died of the disease. Never consume the meat of animals that you suspect may have died of Anthrax.

Developed from “Farmer Sheet on Anthrax”, Dutch Committee for Afghanistan <http://www.dca-vet.nl/>, by H. Zornetzer 2007

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