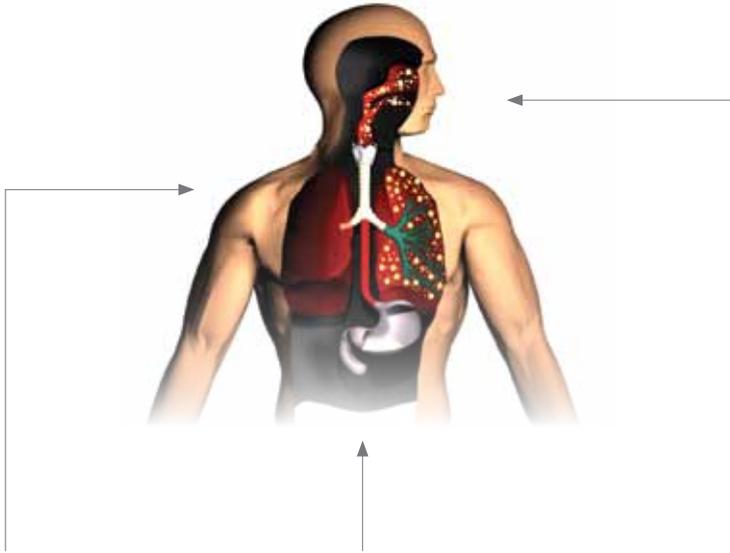


Anthrax

Anthrax is a serious illness caused by the bacterium *B. anthracis*. It is primarily a disease of plant-eating animals; cattle and sheep are common hosts. The spores are extremely resistant to environmental factors.



Cutaneous Symptoms

Skin infection begins as a raised itchy bump that resembles an insect bite, but soon turns into an ulcer, usually one to three centimeters in diameter with a black center. Lymph glands in the adjacent area may also swell.

Treatment

Antibiotics are extremely effective against naturally occurring strains. Approximately 20 percent of untreated cases result in death.

Intestinal Symptoms

This form of anthrax may follow the consumption of contaminated meat and is characterized by an acute inflammation of the intestinal tract. Initial signs include nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting and fever, followed by abdominal pain, vomiting, bleeding, and severe diarrhea.

Treatment

Antibiotics are effective. About 25 to 60 percent of untreated cases result in death.

Inhalation Symptoms

Initial symptoms may resemble a common cold, but lead to severe breathing problems and shock after several days.

Treatment

Antibiotics are effective in the first days after infections. About 90 percent of untreated cases result in death.