

Category A and B Agent Characteristics

Disease	Transmission between humans	Infective Dose (aerosol)	Incubation Period	Duration of Illness	Mortality	Persistence of Organism	Vaccine Efficacy against aerosol exposure
Inhalational anthrax	No	8,000 – 50,000 spores	1 – 6 days	3 – 5 days (usually fatal if untreated)	High	Very stable – spores can remain viable for > 40 years in soil	Limited access
Pneumonic Plague	High	100-5000 organisms	2-3 days	1 – 6 days (usually fatal)	High unless treated within 12 – 24 hours		Not available
Smallpox	High	10 – 100 organisms	7 – 19 days (average 12 days)	4 weeks	About 30% in unvaccinated	Very stable, especially at low temperatures)	Good
Tularemia	No	10 – 50 organisms	2 – 10 days (average 3 – 5 days)	= 2 weeks	Moderate if untreated	Months in moist soil or other media	Not available
Botulism	No	0.001 µg/kg for type A toxin	1 – 5 days	Death in 24 - 72 hours	High without respiratory support	For weeks in food and drink Very stable in the environment	IND only - held by DOD
Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers	Moderate	1 – 10 organisms	4 – 21 days	Death between 7 and 16 days	High to moderate	Variable depending upon the agent	No vaccine
Brucellosis	No	10 – 100 organisms	5 – 60 days	Weeks to months	< 5% untreated	Very stable	No vaccine
Glanders	Low	Assumed low	10 – 14 days	Death in 7 – 10 days in septicemic form	> 50%	Very stable	No vaccine
Q Fever	Rarely	1 – 10 organisms	10 – 40 days	2 – 14 days	Very low	For months on wood and sand	Good
Staph enterotoxin B	No	0.03 µg/person to result in incapacitation	3 – 13 hours after inhalation	Hours	< 1%	Resistant to freezing	No vaccine

IND – Investigational New Drug
DOD – Department of Defense

Adapted from: USAMRIID'S Medical Management of Biological Casualties Handbook, 4th Edition, February 2001