



THE CITY OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Rudolph W. Giuliani
Mayor

Neal L. Cohen, M.D.
Commissioner

September 11, 2001

ALERT: Terrorist Attack at the World Trade Center in New York City: Medical and Public Health Issues of Urgent Concern

Please Share this Alert with the Following Key Staff at Your Hospital:

- 1 – Hospital Administration, including Medicine and Nursing**
- 2 - Hospital Safety Director**
- 3 - Emergency Departments**
- 4 – Hospital Pharmacy and Laboratories**

TO: Emergency Medicine Directors, Infection Control Practitioners and Infectious Disease Physicians, and Other Persons on the NYCDOH Broadcast Facsimile Alert

FROM: Marcelle Layton, MD, Assistant Commissioner
New York City Department of Health

We are sending this broadcast alert in response to the tragic terrorist attack at the World Trade Center this morning. We want to alert you to the following issues:

- A) **There is Currently No Evidence of a Biologic, Radiologic or Chemical Attack:** The NYC Department of Health (DOH) has received no information suggesting that a biologic, chemical or radiologic terrorist attack has occurred in New York City. There is currently NO evidence that there were any chemical or biologic agents on the planes. Moreover, biologic or chemical agents would likely not have survived an explosion of that magnitude. Therefore, at this time, we are not recommending antibiotic prophylaxis for NYC residents.

However, we do request that you be especially alert to ANY unusual disease issues over the next three weeks. Urgent health issues for which we would want to be notified immediately include:

- 1 – Any unusual increase or clustering in patients presenting with clinical symptoms that suggest an infectious disease outbreak (e.g., ≥ 2 patients presenting with unexplained pneumonia, respiratory failure or sepsis – especially if occurring in persons who are otherwise healthy. In addition, please notify us regarding a sudden increase in flu-like symptoms).**

2 – A suspect case of any of the following infectious diseases:

Anthrax	Brucellosis	Q Fever	Tularemia
Botulism	Plague	Smallpox	

Please report immediately to the Communicable Disease Program at the NYC Department of Health if you evaluate patients with any of these suspected illnesses or conditions. Please call either our main number at 212-788-9830, or if unable to get through, please call the Poison Control Center at 212-764-7667 or the Mayors Office of Emergency Management at the contact number listed at the end of this alert.

B) Assessment of Acute Care Hospital Needs: The New York City and State Departments of Health, in collaboration with the Greater New York Hospital Association, have conducted a rapid assessment of hospital needs in Manhattan by a telephone survey. However, to facilitate ongoing assessments, a Web-based system to monitor hospital material and personnel needs during the response to this incident is currently in development in collaboration with the Oracle Corporation. (Hospital Administrator – You may be contacted with further information on how to access this system in the next 24 hours).

C) Reporting Fatal Cases and Information on Mortuary Issues, Including Death Certificate Registration for Deaths Related to this Incident

- a. ALL deaths directly or secondarily related to this terrorist incident should be reported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner at 212-447-2030.
- b. The NYCDOH Burial Desk for registration of death certificates has been temporarily moved to the Central Harlem Health Center. Please notify all **Funeral Directors** regarding the relocation of this office:

NYC Health Department Burial Desk
Central Harlem Health Center
2238 Fifth Avenue (at 135th Street)
New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212-926-2150
212-368-6538

Fax: 212-926-2526

D) Smoke and Dust Advisory

Individuals who have a history of heart and lung conditions or are in areas where smoke or dust is visible are advised to remain indoors with the windows shut and air conditioners on recirculate or turned off. Persons with difficulty breathing or chest pain are advised to seek medical care immediately.

E) Td Vaccine Availability

Standard recommendations for use of Td vaccine should be followed for wound management. If additional vaccine supplies are needed by your hospital, please contact the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management Command Center at the number listed below.

The Mayor's Office of Emergency Management has been temporarily relocated. **In the event that you require acute assistance, please contact the city's command center at 212-477-9610.** Representatives from the New York City and State Departments of Health, as well as the Health and Hospital Corporation and the Greater New York Hospital Association have representatives on site. As telephone lines are limited, only emergency calls should be made to the numbers listed above.