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Anthrax (Bacillus anthracis) 1990 Case Definition | CDC  
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Anthrax (  
Bacillus anthracis  
)  
1990 Case Definition  
Anthrax (  
Bacillus anthracis  
)  
1990 Case Definition  
NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
Clinical Description  
An illness with acute onset characterized by several distinct clinical forms including:  
Cutaneous: a skin lesion evolving over 2 to 6 days from a papule, through a vesicular stage, to a depressed black eschar  
Inhalation: a brief prodrome resembling a viral respiratory illness followed by development of hypoxia and dyspnea, with x-ray evidence of mediastinal widening  
Intestinal: severe abdominal distress followed by fever and signs of septicemia  
Oropharyngeal: mucosal lesion in the oral cavity or oropharynx, cervical adenopathy and edema, and fever  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Isolation of  
Bacillus anthracis  
from a clinical specimen,  
OR  
Fourfold or greater rise in either the anthrax enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) or electrophoretic immunotransblot (EITB) titer between acute- and convalescent-phase serum specimens obtained greater than or equal to 2 weeks apart,  
OR  
Anthrax ELISA titer greater than or equal to 64 or an EITB reaction to the protective antigen and/or lethal factor bands in one or more serum samples obtained after onset of symptoms,  
OR  
Demonstration of  
B. anthracis  
in a clinical specimen by immunofluorescence  
Case Classification  
Confirmed  
A clinically compatible illness that is laboratory confirmed  
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NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
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