

Title:

The Rising Risk of a Terrorist Attack - Could It Happen Today?

Word Count:

464

Summary:

Dr. Reyes contends that our government continually acknowledges that it's not a matter of "if" we are attacked again, but "when." The rising risk of a terrorist attack is real.

Keywords:

terrorist, smallpox, fiction book, non-fiction book, best selling fiction book, Paulo Reyes, biochemical attack, smallpox vaccine, disaster recovery, thriller, terrorism

Article Body:

You've read about it, you've seen it: terrorist attacks on trains, in nightclubs and the worst terrorist attack in U.S history on September 11th in New York City. But will the next terrorist attack strike even closer to home - your own hospital's emergency room. Dr. Paulo J. Reyes, a First Responder in California, ER Doctor, and author of the fiction thriller, Sledgehammer fears there exists a clear and present danger today and has written a book on the possibilities of a biochemical attack with smallpox. It clearly outlines how unprepared our nation is and what could happen if we don't prepare now.

Dr. Reyes contends that our government continually acknowledges that it's not a matter of "if" we are attacked again, but "when." He supports voluntary smallpox vaccinations, which the military and President Bush himself have already received, but feels more needs to be more done to educate the nation of the risks involved in order to be adequately prepared for a biochemical attack. Reyes states, "As is evidenced with Hurricane Katrina and the reports that are now publicly known, the government needs to step up its disaster recovery efforts especially for First Responders and Emergency Personnel."

Also of equal importance is the fact that First Responders and medical doctors can be ill equipped to handle such an attack. A study listed in Archives of Internal Medicine showed 631 doctors, mostly medical residents, were given a test prior to completing an online training course. On the pretest, half the doctors misdiagnosed botulism; 84 percent misdiagnosed plague and a case of routine chickenpox was misdiagnosed as smallpox by 42 percent of the doctors.

"We've got a dangerous gap here and we need a much clearer strategic game plan," said Shelley Hearne, executive director of Trust for America's Health, which tracks how well states are prepared for bioterrorism or a pandemic.

Reyes' book, *Sledgehammer*, although a fictional account of a small pox outbreak in a Los Angeles emergency room, is based on extensive research by Reyes and his experience and terrorist training as a First Responder. In *Sledgehammer* the hospital staff of a Los Angeles emergency room face the daunting challenge of preventing the contagious disease from quickly spreading and affecting their patients and colleagues alike. What adds further drama is the discovery that this particular form of smallpox is an aggressive type - *sledgehammer smallpox* or a malignant smallpox, which although it starts as non-typical rash, it quickly turns into a life-threatening situation. The terrorist's threats also expand to several sports arenas, airports and shopping malls. The 5 star review book begs to ask the question, what if? What if this happened today, are we ready? After reading this medical thriller, you'll want to do everything you can to ensure we are.