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## What's New in Treatment Information?

### What should people living with HIV be concerned with as far as the threat of terrorists using smallpox as a biological weapon?

Recently, rumors have suggested that terrorists may use smallpox as a biological weapon, much like the cases of anthrax in the US. The reason it's getting a lot of attention in the US is simply a matter of the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) wanting to look prepared. It's probably very unlikely that smallpox would ever be used as a weapon. This is because once smallpox starts spreading in any population, the risk of it spreading around the world is high. It would inevitably go right back to the terrorists who used it in the first place. Right now, smallpox is almost totally eradicated except in a few countries. Spreading smallpox around the world again would earn the wrath of almost everyone.

The DHHS is currently testing diluted versions of the current smallpox vaccine to see if that will stretch out the supply. The DHHS is reluctant to start manufacturing more of that supply as it's a relatively *dirty* vaccine, made from smallpox sores from calves and pigs. If they have to make more, they would rather engineer a new and better vaccine. The current vaccine will kill some of those who use it and make others sick.

Statements have been made discouraging the use of smallpox vaccines in people with immune deficiencies. Technically, that would include people with AIDS, but it's less sure if it would also include HIV-positive people with intact immune systems. It's probably safe to say that doctors would want to make decisions with their patients about this on an individual basis, based on the patient's history and current condition.

However, at this time, it's a moot point to speculate about getting a smallpox vaccination. Nobody is yet getting the vaccine in any form. When treating smallpox, it's possible to use one of the anti-CMV drugs, cidofovir from Gilead. The federal government has discussed the situation with Gilead, as has Project Inform. There are apparently large stocks of the drug in storage under Gilead's control because the drug never sold well for CMV. This was due to its serious kidney toxicity, its intravenous administration and cases of CMV dropping dramatically.

The drug has a long shelf life and Gilead apparently made much more of it than they could ever sell. The government hasn't officially decided whether it will use cidofovir if there's an outbreak of smallpox, but it would probably be reserved for serious, life-threatening cases only. There's little reason to believe they would try to use it in a preventive way, given its toxicity.

### Bio-terrorism: Information and Resources for Patients

reprinted from Kaiser Permanente Patient Information

#### Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

##### 1. Can I get vaccinated?

There are no available vaccines for the potential agents of bio-terrorism. The government has a supply of vaccines, which will be released if needed, but they are not available otherwise. This includes smallpox and anthrax. In addition, anthrax vaccine has never been shown to be effective in respiratory anthrax (the form an attack would take) and has some potentially serious side effects.

##### 2. Should my doctor prescribe preventive antibiotics against anthrax, plague, or other bio-terrorist threat diseases?

There is no single antibiotic to protect against an attack, and it is difficult to predict what would be needed and when. Therefore, preventive antibiotics are not needed for anthrax, plague, or any other bio-terrorist threat disease, and public health officials do not recommend prescribing them. Furthermore, inappropriate use of antibiotics can lead to unnecessary harmful side effects and to the development of antibiotic-resistant organisms. If there is an attack, public health authorities have plans to disseminate information and facilitate supplies of needed medications.

### 3. How can I tell if a bio-terrorist attack has occurred?

There would be multiple suddenly seriously ill, otherwise healthy persons. The public health authorities would be notified immediately and you would hear it via the media. You should seek care for any normal reason you would seek care, such as severe illness, severe symptoms or persistent symptoms.

### 4. How can I be sure my health care needs will be met if a bio-terrorist attack occurs?

If a bio-terrorist attack were to occur, local and state public health departments will be responsible for disseminating uniform treatment guidelines appropriate to the situation and for ensuring coordinated and rapid distribution of antibiotics to medical facilities, medical and other response personnel, and to exposed or ill members of the general public.

The federal government has assembled a National Pharmaceutical Stockpile (NPS) to supplement local and state resources. The NPS includes immediate response Push Packages that are caches of pharmaceuticals, antidotes, and medical supplies designed to address a variety of biologic and chemical agents. The Push Packages are positioned in secure regional warehouses ready for immediate deployment to the airfield closest to the affected area within 12 hours of the federal decision to release NPS assets. This program is supplemented with a Vendor Managed Inventory program that ensures the continual supply of pharmaceuticals, antidotes, and medical supplies to an affected area when the NPS has been depleted.

### Web-based resources for patients

1. American Psychological Association. The APA website contains the following useful articles:

- "Coping with Terrorism"  
[www.helping.apa.org/daily/terrorism.html](http://www.helping.apa.org/daily/terrorism.html)
- "Managing Traumatic Stress: Tips for Recovering From Disaster and Other Traumatic Events"  
[www.helping.apa.org/daily/traumaticstress.html](http://www.helping.apa.org/daily/traumaticstress.html)
- "Reactions and Guidelines for Children Following Trauma/Disaster"  
[www.helping.apa.org/daily/ptguidelines.html](http://www.helping.apa.org/daily/ptguidelines.html)

2. David Baldwin's Trauma Information website. This comprehensive site contains a variety of handouts and links to useful information from the American Red Cross, the American Psychological Association, the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and various mental health departments and organizations. <http://www.trauma-pages.com/pg5.htm>.

## What's New in Public Policy?

### Update On Federal HIV/AIDS Funding Debate

Congress is continuing to debate funding levels for HIV/AIDS programs for Fiscal Year 2002. In early October, the House of Representatives passed its version of the Labor-Health and Human Services (HHS) appropriations bill, which funds HIV/AIDS care, treatment, prevention, and research programs.

As of this writing, the Senate is finishing work on its version of the appropriations bill. If there are differences between the House and Senate versions, a joint House/Senate conference committee will convene to negotiate a final bill. Then, the bill will go to the President for his signature or veto.

The good news is that the House approved over \$200 million in increased funding for HIV/AIDS programs and the result was a big improvement over President Bush's proposed budget. However, the increases were far short of what is needed to provide adequate HIV/AIDS care, treatment, and prevention services.

Of particular concern is the lack of adequate funding proposed for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which provides treatments to low-income uninsured and underinsured people living with HIV/AIDS across the country. Many state ADAPS are currently experiencing difficulties meeting the needs of their clients. Last year, Congress appropriated a \$61 million increase for ADAP, far less than the \$130 million identified by experts as needed to meet growing demand on the program.

The impact of this underfunding is being reported by many states. Nine states have closed enrollment to new clients. By the end of this fiscal year, seven more states may cap enrollment or implement program restrictions. Currently, there are over 600 people on ADAP waiting lists, and that number is expected to increase.

This year, advocates are asking for a \$120 million increase for ADAP. However, the House approved an inadequate \$60 million increase. Even more alarming is that the Senate is considering only a \$21 million increase for this program. If these figures do not improve, we are likely to see very serious problems with people being able to access their treatments through many state ADAPS. While it will be possible to secure an emergency supplemental increase for ADAP in the middle of the Fiscal Year, that can be a difficult process with no guarantees. Advocates are working very hard right now to educate Congress about the need for adequate funding for ADAP and all HIV/AIDS programs. Look for an update on appropriations in the next *What's New?*

## What's New in Fund Raising?

### Corporate Spotlight: The Wells Fargo Foundation

At the beginning of the AIDS crisis, Wells Fargo was one of the first major U.S. corporations to provide meaningful assistance in the fight against the disease by funding grassroots organizations and outreach at a time when there was little known about the disease and how it would progress. Indeed, Wells Fargo not only gave monetary support to grassroots organizations, they also initiated a program for all Wells Fargo employees to provide time off to care for loved ones suffering from HIV/AIDS.

Today, throughout its 23-state territory Wells Fargo Foundation continues to actively support numerous AIDS service providers such as Project Angel Food, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, the Desert AIDS Project, and Project Inform. At a time when many shied away from addressing the needs of those living with HIV/AIDS, Wells Fargo stepped up to the plate with a call for action and set the standard of response which to this day serves as a model for other major corporations throughout the United States.

With its headquarters in San Francisco, Wells Fargo has experienced the extraordinary affect of HIV/AIDS on its employees, customers and those close to them. Wells Fargo understands that in spite of media portrayals to the contrary, the battle against HIV/AIDS has not yet been won. Wells Fargo also recognizes that HIV/AIDS continues to ravage low-income groups, women and people of color, and has vowed to continue to fight until there's a cure.

Project Inform would like to thank Mario Diaz, Vice President of the Wells Fargo Foundation, and Jonathan Weedman, Regional Vice President of the Wells Fargo Foundation, for their ongoing support of Project Inform. We are especially grateful to Wells Fargo for its continued support of important programs like Project WISE, Project Inform's women-specific treatment information program, and Project Inform's annual *Evening of Hope* events.

Shalini Eddens, Project Manager of Project WISE, says "Wells Fargo's support assists Project WISE to continue providing accurate, women-specific HIV/AIDS treatment information to those most in need." She added, "Through our newsletter *WISE Words* and other HIV/AIDS treatment information publications, Project WISE is able to keep HIV+ women informed and empowered. Wells Fargo's support is integral in making this work possible."

Wells Fargo's dedication to bringing an end to HIV/AIDS, and to support organizations that assist people living with HIV/AIDS until that end comes to pass, improves the lives of countless people in the Bay Area and across the United States every year.

### Los Angeles Evening of Hope Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2001; Beverly Hills Hotel

Project Inform will honor a select few of the activists, volunteers and philanthropists who have contributed to the work of Project Inform since its founding in 1985. This year's honorees include: Barry Krost, who is well known in the entertainment industry as a leading manager and producer; Bruce Vilanch, a six-time Emmy award winner and well-known comedy writer who has shown a deep personal commitment to fighting AIDS and homophobia; and Brenda Freiberg, who has drawn on her personal experience and loss as well as her professional background in healthcare, public policy and communications to combat HIV/AIDS for over 15 years.

Project Inform recognizes Macy's West with the Corporate Leadership Award. Macy's West has been a visionary leader in its support of community organizations engaged in the fight against AIDS. Since 1988, Macy's Passport events alone have distributed over \$13 million to community-based AIDS organizations.

Martin Delaney notes, "The relentlessness of the epidemic and the underlying inequities that fuel it demand that we continue, and even redouble our efforts. Fighting AIDS has become a lifetime commitment—for me, for you, for everyone who has played a role in or contributed to the solution. With your help, together, we can—and will—do whatever it takes."

Past recipients of recognition from Project Inform have included Erik Sterling and Jason Winters; actresses Judith Light, Swoosie Kurtz, Diahnne Carroll, and Nell Carter; actress and model Kathy Ireland; Olympic Champion Greg Louganis; scientists Dr. David Ho, Dr. Gene Shearer, Dr. Nava Sarver, Dr. Anthony Fauci; and author and activist Larry Kramer.

For sponsorship inquiries or to purchase individual tickets: [www.projectinform.org](http://www.projectinform.org) or call 310-491-1401.

### Holiday Card Project

We have a new card design this year, courtesy of photographer Jack McCarty of Palm Springs—a seasonal red image of a wall mural from Pompeii, Italy! Now you can take the hassle out of sending holiday cards to clients, customers and friends—and feel good doing it—by participating in Project Inform's Holiday Card Program. Here's how you can get involved:

#### Buy Project Inform Holiday Cards

This year, Project Inform has a selection of five designs to choose from to meet all your holiday card needs. Cards will be sold in packs of eight with envelopes for \$12 each to send to the folks on your holiday card list.

#### Use the Project Inform Holiday Card Service

For a suggested donation of \$5 to \$10 per card, Project Inform will hand-address, sign and send holiday cards to your entire card list!

Or, supply us with your own cards and we will process them for you. Each card will indicate that a contribution to Project Inform was made in the addressee's name. Project Inform will mail the cards unless you request they be sent back to you for personalization.

**Ask your company to participate**

By donating \$1,000 or more to underwrite this program, your company can become a member of Project Inform's special circle of corporate donors, our Partners In Hope. Companies can also make use of the Holiday Card Service mentioned above.

For more information regarding this special program and others, please contact Julie Doherty at 415-558-8669 x223. You may also view and purchase all five holiday card designs on our web site: [www.projectinform.org](http://www.projectinform.org).

## Project Inform Calendar

**CSTEP Training; Level B**  
San Jose, CA  
November 5-7  
Free HIV treatment and care training for non-medical service providers.  
Call Claire Wingfield, API Wellness Center, 415-292-3420 x312

**Evening of Hope**  
Los Angeles, CA  
November 14 6:30 - 9:30pm  
Annual Fundraising Dinner  
Contact Julie Doherty; 415-558-8669 x2223 or [jdoherly@projectinform.org](mailto:jdoherly@projectinform.org)

**North American AIDS Treatment Action Forum**  
Vancouver, BC  
December 2-5 9am-5pm  
PI Staff [www.nmac.org](http://www.nmac.org)

**CSTEP Training; Level B**  
San Jose, CA  
December 10-11  
Free HIV treatment and care training for non-medical service providers.  
**En Español.**  
Call Claire Wingfield, API Wellness Center, 415-292-3420 x312

**CSTEP Training; Level B**  
San Jose, CA  
December 10-11  
Free HIV treatment and care training for non-medical service providers.  
**En Español.**  
Call Claire Wingfield, API Wellness Center, 415-292-3420 x312

SUPPORT PROJECT INFORM BY BECOMING A PLEDGE PARTNER

As a Project Inform Pledge Partner, you can spread your tax-deductible gift into monthly payments. Pledge Partners and Partners in Hope receive "What's New?" our monthly treatment newsletter.

ADDRESS INFORMATION

**Yes, I want to help Project Inform remain at the forefront of providing critically important HIV/AIDS treatment information!**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. / Ms. / Mrs. Mr. / Ms. / Mrs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Phone Fax

This is a new address. My (Our) old address was: Address \_\_\_\_\_

DONOR FORM

**Enclosed is my . . .**

- Pledge Partner pledge of:** \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month for \_\_\_\_\_ months  
(\$40 or more per month for a year entitles you to Partners In Hope membership)
- Donation of:**  \$35  \$50  \$100  \$250  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to join Partners in Hope with a donation of:**

- \$500  \$1,000  \$2,500  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

**In Honor of / In Memory of:** (circle one) \_\_\_\_\_

- Please omit my name from any public listing of donors to Project Inform.**

PAYMENT INFORMATION

**Circle One:** CHECK

\_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card #

\_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name as Shown on Card

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Signature

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WNEW

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