



Anthrax

Australian national notifiable diseases case definition

This document contains the surveillance case definition for anthrax which is nationally notifiable within Australia. State and territory health departments use this definition to decide whether to notify the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care of a case.

Version	Status	Last reviewed	Implementation date
1.0		March, 2004	March, 2004

Reporting

Only **confirmed cases** should be notified.

Confirmed case

A confirmed case requires either:

1. Laboratory definitive evidence

OR

2. Laboratory suggestive evidence AND **clinical evidence**.

Laboratory definitive evidence

Isolation of *Bacillus anthracis* -like organisms or spores confirmed by a reference laboratory.

Laboratory suggestive evidence

1. Detection of *Bacillus anthracis* by microscopic examination of stained smears

OR

2. Detection of *Bacillus anthracis* by nucleic acid testing.

Clinical evidence

1. Cutaneous: skin lesion evolving over 1-6 days from a papular through a vesicular stage, to a depressed black eschar invariably accompanied by oedema that may be mild to extensive

OR

2. Gastrointestinal: abdominal distress characterised by nausea, vomiting, anorexia and followed by fever

OR

3. Rapid onset of hypoxia, dyspnoea and high temperature, with radiological evidence of mediastinal widening

OR

4. Meningeal: acute onset of high fever, convulsions, loss of consciousness and meningeal signs and symptoms.