

Systematic literature review of cutaneous anthrax outbreaks and their respective epidemiological investigations

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TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Epidemiologist, community health workers, environmental health workers,

ABSTRACT: Cutaneous anthrax is an extremely preventable disease, yet still accounts for 95% of all anthrax cases, and has left many regions endemic. The objectives of this study was to review published outbreak investigations for cutaneous anthrax, while examining the current and new risk factors, as well as the present control measures and their effectiveness at preventing future outbreaks. A literature search of articles was performed using PubMed, Google Scholar, and Oregon State Library. Articles in English and pertaining to human subjects only, were retrieved. Seven articles included in this study examined sources of outbreak for cutaneous anthrax, investigated suspected cases using clinical diagnosis and surveys, and evaluated current control measures. Three studies reported relative risk, suggesting there is a likely association between butchering sick animals and infection. Further findings suggested a correlation between an individual's socioeconomic status and the likelihood of contracting anthrax. Additionally, the quality of livestock in the area can have a cyclical nature on cutaneous anthrax infections among humans. The cumulative evidence concludes that an improvement of surveillance and control measures is needed in endemic regions, and future investigation of new risk factors is required.

OBJECTIVE(S):

- Discuss the current risk factors associated with cutaneous anthrax
- Evaluate the control measures and identify potential new measures

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