

cooperative arrangements for prevention and relief during emergencies and acts of terrorism. Since 1994, the Council has included the coordinating group for disaster medicine problems of NIS countries. The chairman is Deputy Minister of Public Health of the Russian Federation. During each session, the Council considers four to five topics on disaster medicine. The Council ratified 11 interstate documents on disaster medicine training programs, vocabulary of terms, textbook, and methodical documents.

In 1996, during an international conference, Command-Staff Exercises (CSE) relative to disaster medicine problems following earthquakes were conducted. International CSE "Management of Emergency Medical Relief in a Military Conflict" is to be held in 2003 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The Council ratified an Activity Coordination Program for emergency prevention and health relief on the territories of NIS countries for 2001–2003, and the Plan of Cooperation and Mutual Assistance of Disaster Medicine Services of the NIS countries in emergencies. These documents envision the elaboration of a coordination doctrine of medical assistance for the injured during an emergency, including: (1) training of managerial bodies, institutions, and units for work during emergency conditions; (2) determination of the connection and the emergency notification order; (3) coordination of the force requirements and the Disaster Medicine Service resources needed for emergency health relief; (4) production of a sufficient supply of medical equipment; (5) information exchange, including the facts regarding the nature of the emergency, and the expected emergency health relief measures that will be required; (6) provision of the required manpower and supplies; (7) provision of medical staff, victims, and the population defense; and (8) organization and implementation of measures for maintaining the sanitary-epidemiological well-being.

**Keywords:** cooperation, international; coordination; disaster medicine; emergencies; exercises; NIS; prevention; public health; relief; supplies; terrorism; training

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### Public Health Affairs and Prophylactic Treatment of Individuals Exposed to Biological Terrorism

*Mirjana Stantic-Pavlinic, MD, MSc*

Specialist in Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology, Institute of Public Health of Ljubljana, Centre of Epidemiology, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Almost any kind of micro-organisms can be expected in acts of biological terrorism. Some have been recognized for a long time and almost forgotten in the developed world, in which sanitation measures, good hygienic practices, and vaccination programs are practiced. Some of micro-organisms potentially used in biological terrorist attacks could be classified as a newly recognized micro-organisms, often called "emerging infectious diseases." In the course of a biological attack and afterwards, we should try to recognize the clinical presentation of disease as soon as possible, and conduct epidemiological investigations to identify the source of the infection and the mode of spread of the micro-organism(s). Laboratory confirmation of the clinical diagnosis will be obligatory, even though many times the

laboratory diagnoses should be done only at specially protected and equipped laboratory levels. At the start of biological attack, we can expect to encounter serious victims of the attack, especially before laboratory confirmation of diagnoses.

For some communicable diseases, the use of prophylactic treatment may be the best protective measure. The effect of protection may begin immediately after the start of treatment, which is a big advantage in comparison with the use of vaccines. By choosing the proper initial prophylactic drug and schedules, we can expect prevention of some cases, amelioration of symptoms, and the lower mortality rate of victims. The spectrum of drugs that can be used is broad and dependent upon recognized micro-organisms. Duration of treatment varies according to the defined scheme. Some prophylactic treatments could be accomplished using very old drugs, almost excluded from usual treatment nowadays; some of them are newly recognized. We can expect side effects after treatment with some these drugs, especially if the prophylactic scheme is prescribed to last a long time. Before prescription of drugs, we should ask patients about possible side effects—experiences in the course of previous treatments with the prescribed drug. We should choose the schedule carefully, and the drugs as well. They may be different for children and adults. In some cases, we can revise the treatment after receiving results of microbial susceptibilities of isolated/identified micro-organisms. In this paper, the schedules for prophylactic treatment for anthrax, tularemia, plague, cholera, brucellosis, and other communicable diseases will be discussed.

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E-mail: mirjana.stantic@zzv-lj.si

### Mustard Gas Exposure in Pediatric Patients (Long-Term Health Status of Mustard-Exposed Children 14 Years After Chemical Bombardment of Sardasht)

*Shabriar Khateri, MD;<sup>1</sup> Mostafa Ghanei, MD;<sup>1</sup> M. Reza Soroush, MD;<sup>2</sup> David Haines, MD<sup>3</sup>*

1. Chemical Warfare Victims Research Center, Tehran, Iran
2. Janbazan Engineering and Medical Sciences Research Institute, Tehran, Iran
3. George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA

Mustard agents are chemical weapons that act through alkylation of cellular components, causing acute symptoms that include severe blistering of tissue exposed to the vapor or liquid agent and a diverse range of chronic illnesses. During the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq, extensive employment of chemical munitions by Iraqi forces was documented, including attacks on both military and civilian targets. One of these incidents, an aerial bombardment of the Iranian border town of Sardasht in June 1987, is the focus of the present investigation. This is a report on the mustard-induced lesions among 20 female and 30 male victims who were under 10 years of age at the time of exposure. Physical examinations revealed that lesions of the lungs were most common (100%), followed by skin (98%) and eye (86%) lesions, with 0–8% classed as severe; 4–16% as moderate; and 82–84% as mild lesional coverage. It was also noted that,