

PROTECTING AMERICANS



NCEZID scientists studying bats to understand their relationship to a dangerous virus (Marburg) that is similar to Ebola.

HOW WE KEEP AMERICANS SAFE

At NCEZID, our first priority is to keep people safe. Preparing for infectious disease threats—naturally occurring or intentional—is one of the mission-critical activities of NCEZID. We do not know when—or if—a national health emergency like the anthrax attacks of 2001 might happen again. What we do know is that if anthrax or another biological agent were intentionally released, NCEZID will be central to CDC’s response because of our unique assets, some of which include:

We have the scientific expertise

- At CDC, the scientists who specialize in the scariest pathogens work at NCEZID. NCEZID’s epidemiologists and microbiologists are among the world’s leading experts in highly pathogenic bacteria and viruses like those that cause anthrax, botulism, plague, smallpox, and Ebola.
- They also handle less-familiar but dangerous germs that cause brucellosis, tularemia, Q fever, Lassa fever, Rift Valley fever, Marburg virus, and other viral hemorrhagic fevers.
- These specialized NCEZID scientists are vital in helping CDC and its partners prepare by developing diagnostic tests and updated guidance for clinicians, laboratories, public health officials, and the public. All of this would be critically important to saving lives during a large-scale public health emergency caused by bioterrorists.

THE WORK OF CDC’S **National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)** is about protecting America’s health, safety, and security. NCEZID is ground zero when there’s an outbreak of infectious disease. We have world-class scientists, researchers, laboratories, and emergency responders to protect people from bioterror threats like anthrax and illnesses that cross borders and affect travelers and people entering the country.



National Center for
EMERGING and ZOOBOTIC INFECTIOUS DISEASES





Scientists preparing to enter the BSL-4 lab that handles the world's deadliest germs.



A CDC quarantine public health officer takes a call from an airline crew alerting him that a flight is about to land at Los Angeles International Airport with a sick passenger onboard. *Courtesy of Julie Konidakis*

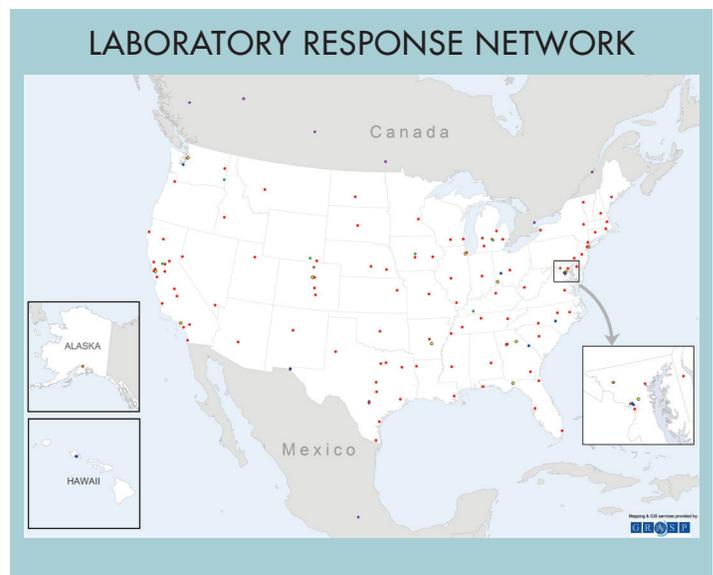
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We oversee work in CDC's high-containment labs (HCLs)

- Many of the dangerous pathogens that could cause major outbreaks or be used in bioterrorism are securely handled in HCLs.
- The biosafety level (BSL)-3 lab handles pathogens that could cause serious illness but could be treated.
- Pathogens that are even more deadly and for which no vaccine or treatment is available require containment in the most secure facility, the BSL-4 lab.

We manage the Laboratory Response Network (LRN)

- The LRN is a unique network of more than 130 laboratories established in collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Association of Public Health Laboratories to respond to bioterrorism, chemical terrorism, and other public health emergencies.
- The network includes state and local public health laboratories, as well as veterinary, agriculture, military, law enforcement, and water- and food-testing labs. When an emergency strikes, the LRN quickly mobilizes as it did during the anthrax investigation of 2001 and in 2014 for the Ebola outbreak.



When a public health emergency like Ebola strikes, the labs in the Laboratory Response Network can quickly mobilize.

We protect US borders

- NCEZID oversees 20 quarantine stations, strategically located at US airports, land borders, and seaports.
- Staff at these Q stations, as they are called, work hard to protect the public's health from threats, both foreign and domestic. The work extends to cover all ports of entry (more than 300) into the United States.
- Every day NCEZID staff work with Customs and Border Protection and other federal agencies, the airlines and cruise lines, and state and local public health departments to prevent the spread of infectious disease to US communities.

Accessible version:
www.cdc.gov/ncezid/what-we-do/our-topics/protecting-americans-from-bioterrorism.html