

## **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS AND PHYSICIANS**

In light of the increased concerns of bioterrorism and the anthrax scare, the Board of Registration in Medicine wishes to caution consumers and physicians of the following:

### **CONSUMER ADVISORY**

Do not Panic. Bayer AG, the German drugmaker, states that Cipro has been in use since 1987 to treat a variety of infections. According to MSNBC, the Food and Drug Administration approved Cipro for anthrax treatment last year. Bayer says current supplies of the drug are more than adequate to cover any emergency.

Be wary of unlicensed drug sales over the Internet.

Public health officials claim that the indiscriminate use of antibiotics can do more harm than good in the long run. Therefore, physicians should perform a physical examination to document the medical need before issuing a prescription for Cipro or any other drug.

The Board of Registration in Medicine is directing consumers and/or physicians to link directly to [www.massmed.org](http://www.massmed.org) for general information on **Disaster Preparedness: Information and Resources**.

You may also wish to link to the Department of Public Health web site at [www.state.ma.us/dph/topics/bioterrorism/anthrax.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/dph/topics/bioterrorism/anthrax.htm) for additional information on the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis* (anthrax).

**The United States Postal Service is offering tips on what to do if you suspect mail is contaminated with anthrax:**

1. Do not handle the mail piece or package suspected of contamination.
2. Notify your supervisor, who will immediately contact the Inspection Service, local police, safety office or designated person.
3. Make sure that damaged or suspicious packages are isolated and the immediate area cordoned off.
4. Ensure that all persons who have touched the mail piece wash their hands with soap and water.
5. Call a postal inspector to report that you have received a parcel in the mail that may contain biological or chemical substances. An inspector will collect the mail, assess the threat situation and coordinate with the FBI.
6. Designated officials will notify local, county and state health departments.
7. Designated officials will notify the state emergency manager.
8. List all persons who have touched the letter and/or envelope. Include contact information. Provide the list to the postal inspector.

9. Place all items worn when in contact with the suspected mail piece in plastic bags and have them available for law enforcement agents.
10. As soon as practical, shower with soap and water.
11. If prescribed medication by medical personnel, take it until otherwise instructed or it runs out.
12. Call the Center for Disease Control Emergency Response at (770) 488-7100 for answers to any questions.