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News Release

New software to aid treatment decisions during radiation exposure incidents

BETHESDA, Md. — Emergency health care providers will soon have access to the latest version of software that can provide diagnostic information to help physicians make casualty treatment decisions during radiation exposure incidents. Army Colonel Patricia K. Lillis-Hearne, director of the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI), released version 1.0 of the Biodosimetry Assessment Tool (BAT) to members at the institute's Board of Governors meeting Sept. 21.

"This is part of the institute's continuing effort to provide medical professionals with automated information tools and guidance that can be used to assess the level of radiation exposure and determine the appropriate treatment options," said COL Lillis-Hearne.

Members of the AFRRI Board of Governors, chaired by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs S. Ward Casscells III, were the first to receive the latest BAT software as one component of AFRRI CD 07-1, Radiation Training and Assessment Tools, Fourth Edition. In early October, others will be able to request to download BAT version 1.0 via the AFRRI website at http://www.afrri.usuhs.mil/www/outreach/biodostools.htm#software.

The BAT software application and other radiation biological dosimetry tools for emergency responders were developed in a research program led by Dr. William F. Blakely, AFRRI, Scientific Research Department.

BAT, which fits on a single mini CD-ROM, requires a standard 32-bit Windows XP operating system and can be installed on a laptop PC. Using checkboxes and text entries, the user enters information about the exposure situation and a victim's symptoms, blood counts, and dose level. The program compares that data with established radiation dose responses and provides a dose assessment in a concise format.

"The AFRRI CD serves as a ready reference for health care professionals who may have to respond to radiation casualty events," said Army Colonel John Mercier, chief of AFRRI Medical Operations.

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Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way

AFRRI, a component of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, is charged with executing medical radiological defense research for the Department of Defense (DoD). AFRRI Military Medical Operations conducts the Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation (MEIR) Course to train medical and operational personnel, responds to radiological and nuclear events to support consequence-management missions, and provides expert consultation to the DoD and other federal agencies on radiation hazards and emergency radiation medicine.

For more information, contact the Office of External Affairs at (301) 295-1219.

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