

# Preventing Anthrax After Exposure: Options

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Options for Postal and Other Workers Exposed to Anthrax,"  
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## Fact:

To date, no cases of inhalational anthrax have occurred among 10,000 persons for whom post exposure antimicrobial treatment was recommended or made available. -

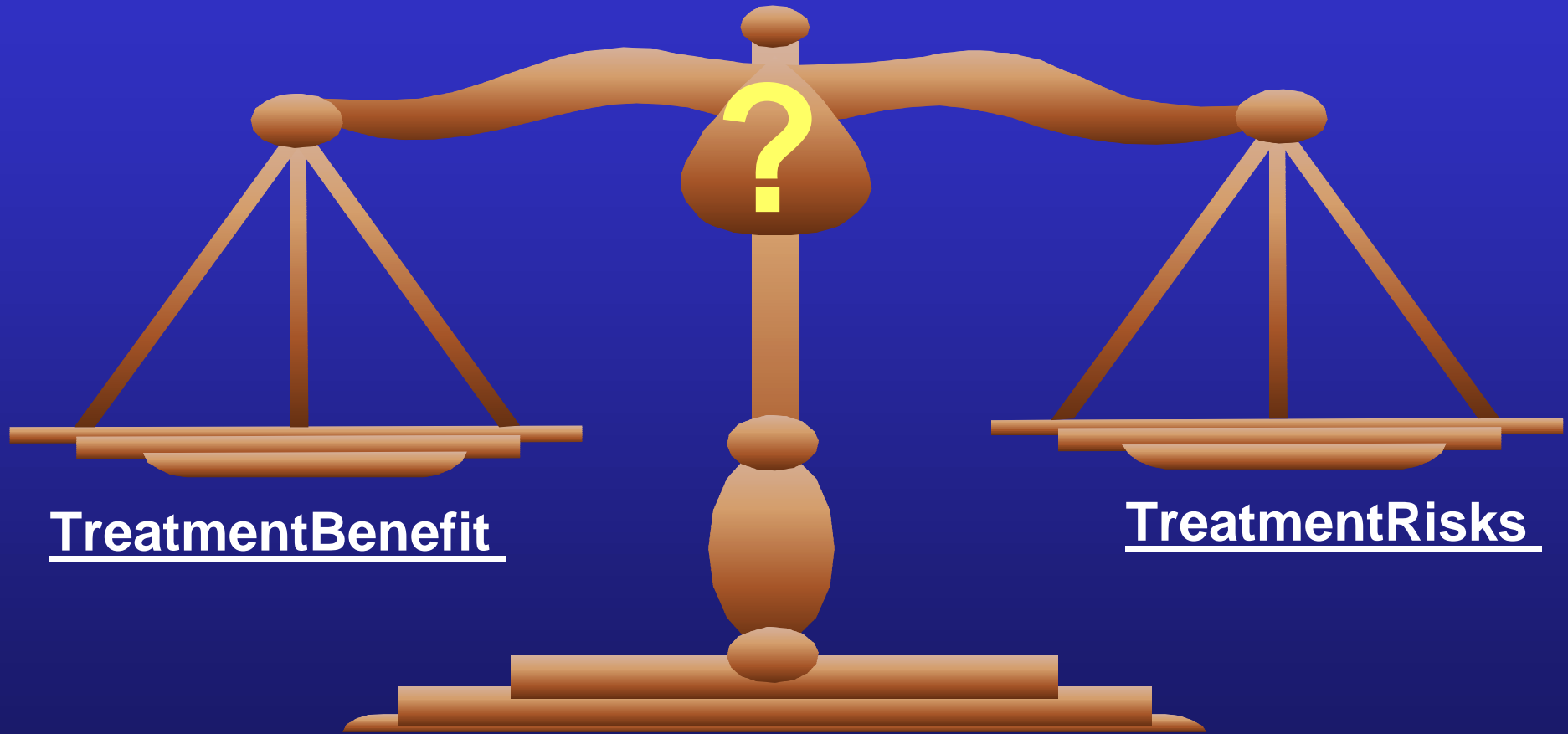
# Key Questions

- Do spores persist after antibiotics, and if so, will inhalational anthrax develop?
- Does adding vaccination/extradays of antibiotics decrease the chance of inhalational anthrax
  - among exposed people who took all 60 days of antibiotics?
  - among exposed people who did not take all 60 days of antibiotics?

# Preventing Anthrax After Exposure: Options

- Initial recommendation:  
Antibiotics for 60 days
- New Option 1:  
Antibiotics for 100 days
- New Option 2:  
40 more days antibiotics plus vaccine (3 doses over 4 weeks)

# Anthrax Prevention Treatment Decisions



## Individual Risk: Tips for Workers

### Things that might mean higher risk

#### Exposure History

- Direct contact with anthrax powder
- Presence in the immediate area where an anthrax-containing envelope was opened
- Presence in an area with widespread environmental contamination
- Presence in a site where someone acquired inhalational anthrax

## Individual Risk: Tips for Workers

### Things that might mean higher risk

#### Exposure History

- Working in an area where an anthrax envelope was processed using mechanical postal equipment
- Working in an area where an anthrax envelope was riffled

## Individual Risk: Tips for Workers

### Things that might mean higher risk

#### Not Taking Antibiotics

- People who couldn't take all 60 days of antibiotics
- People who missed many doses of antibiotics



## Individual Risk: Tips for Workers

### Things that might mean lower risk

#### Exposure History

- No known direct exposure to anthrax powder
- Presence in an area with only focal contamination
- Short time in contaminated area
- Member of a group with:
  - no inhalational anthrax
  - delayed antibiotics but no inhalational anthrax

# Facts about Antibiotics

- To date, no cases of inhalation anthrax have occurred among 10,000 persons for whom antibiotic treatment was recommended or made available
- Side effects are common, but not usually serious
- Taking all 60 days of antibiotics is difficult

# Facts about Anthrax Vaccine

- What we know was learned from vaccination of healthy military personnel
- Vaccine is effective, though not 100%
- Vaccine has short -term side effects
  - Most are local and go away in days or weeks
  - Serious reactions have been rare
- Long-term vaccine evaluation is incomplete

# Vaccine Side Effects

## Mild Problems

- Soreness, redness, or itching where the shot was given (about 1 out of 10 men, about 1 out of 6 women)
- A lump where the shot was given (about 1 person out of 2)
- Muscle aches or joint aches (about 1 person out of 5)
- Headaches (about 1 person out of 5)
- Fatigue (about 1 out of 15 men, about 1 out of 6 women)
- Chills or fever (about 1 person out of 20)
- Nausea (about 1 person out of 20)

# Vaccine Side Effects

## Moderate Problems

- Large areas of redness where the shot was given (up to 1 person out of 20)

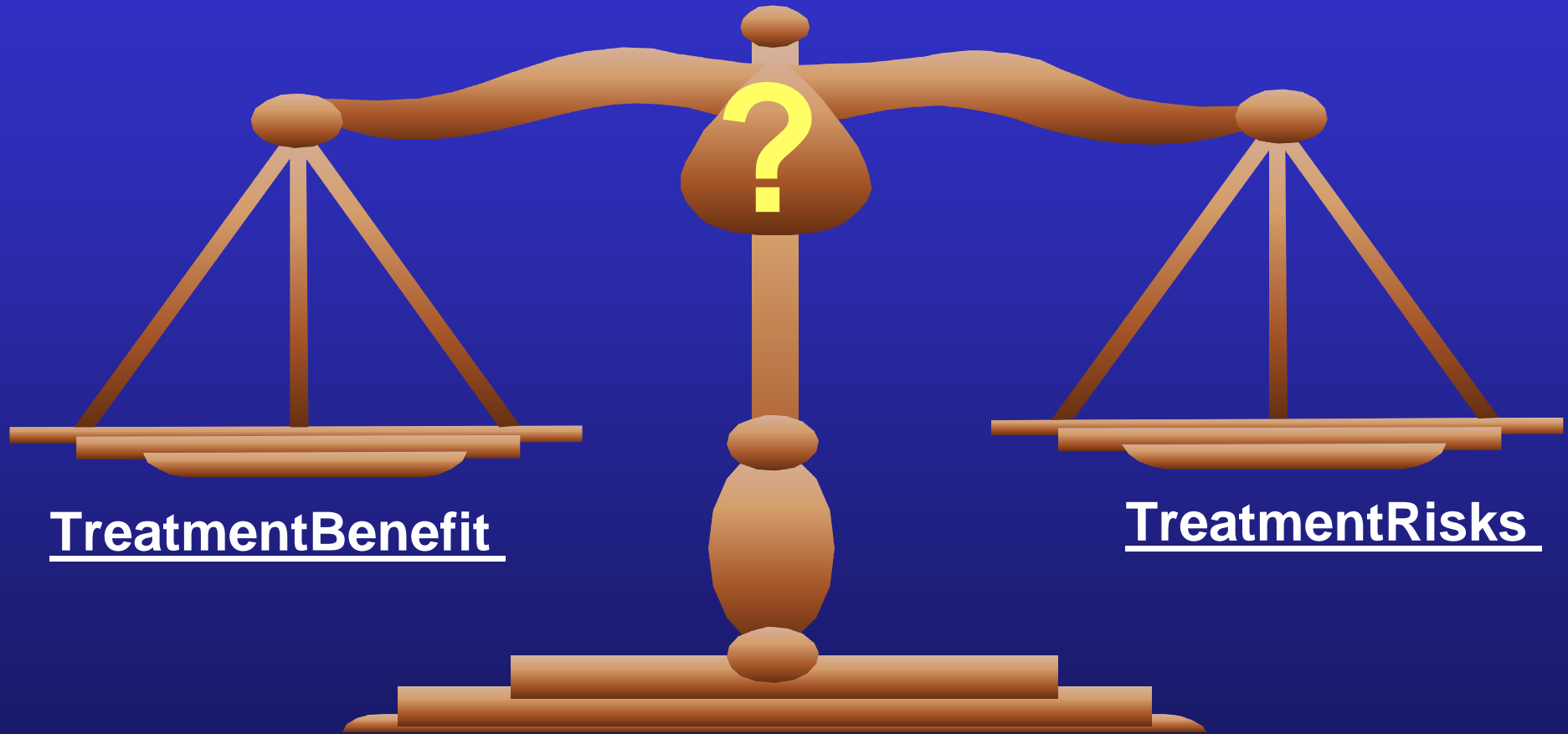
## Severe Problems

- Serious allergic reaction (very rare - less than once in 100,000 doses)

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# Post-exposure Treatment Decisions



## Some Ways to Learn More

- Ask your doctor or other healthcare provider.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
- Call **1-888-246-2675** (English)
- Call **1-888-246-2857** (Español)
- Visit the CDC's website at
- **<http://www.bt.cdc.gov>**