



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

JUN 30 2004

The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon Washington,
D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

Anthrax Immune Globulin (AIG) is a critical medical countermeasure needed in preparation for a response to an anthrax attack. It is prepared from human plasma donated by individuals vaccinated with the licensed BioPort AVA anthrax vaccine. Due to the active anthrax vaccination program in the Armed Forces, the largest resource of high titered anthrax antibody plasma is from U.S. military personnel.

I am requesting that the Department of Defense encourage members of the Armed Forces who have received sufficient doses of anthrax vaccine and are otherwise qualified to donate plasma to volunteer to participate in a plasma collection program administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and their contractor Cangene. I ask that you designate an official to work cooperatively with CDC as appropriate to allow the plasma collection program to proceed as rapidly as possible.

The collected plasma will be processed by Cangene into the AIG product and delivered to the Strategic National Stockpile. In the event of an anthrax incident, the AIG will be available to the U.S. population including the Department of Defense and the family members of military personnel.

Please have your designated representative contact Dr. Jerome Donlon to facilitate moving forward on this important initiative. I very much appreciate your support of this activity that will greatly enhance the status of our preparedness to respond to an anthrax event.

Sincerely,


Tommy G. Thompson