CDC Category List for Biological Diseases

Category Descriptions and Agents

**Category A**
The U.S. public health system and primary healthcare providers must be prepared to address various biological agents, including pathogens that are rarely seen in the United States. High-priority agents include organisms that pose a risk to national security because they:
- can be easily disseminated or transmitted from person to person;
- result in high mortality rates and have the potential for major public health impact;
- might cause public panic and social disruption; and
- require special action for public health preparedness.

**Category B**
Second highest priority agents include those that are:
- moderately easy to disseminate;
- result in moderate morbidity rates and low mortality rates; and
- require specific enhancements of CDC's diagnostic capacity and enhanced disease surveillance.

**Category C**
Third highest priority agents include emerging pathogens that could be engineered for mass dissemination in the future because of:
- availability
- ease of production and dissemination
- and potential for high morbidity and mortality rates and major health impact.
CDC Category List for Biological Diseases

Category A Agents
- *Bacillus anthracis* - "Anthrax"
- *Clostridium botulinum* toxin
- *Yersinia pestis* - "Plague"
- Variola major virus - "Smallpox"
- *Francisella tularensis* - "Tularemia"
- Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers - Filoviruses (Ebola virus and Marburg virus) and Arenaviruses (Lassa virus and Machupo virus)

Category B Agents
- *Brucella spp.* - "Brucellosis"
- Epsilon toxin of *Clostridium perfringens*
- Food safety threats (e.g., *Salmonella* species, *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, *Shigella*)
- Glanders (*Burkholderia mallei*)
- Melioidosis (*Burkholderia pseudomallei*)
- Psittacosis (*Chlamydia psittaci*)
- Q fever (*Coxiella burnetii*)
- Ricin toxin from *Ricinus communis* (castor beans)
- Staphylococcal enterotoxin B
- Typhus fever (*Rickettsia prowazekii*)
- Viral encephalitis (alphaviruses [e.g., Venezuelan equine encephalitis, eastern equine encephalitis, western equine encephalitis])
- Water safety threats (e.g., *Vibrio cholerae, Cryptosporidium parvum*)

Category C Agents
- Emerging infectious disease threats such as Nipah virus and hantavirus.