

Bioterrorism In Perspective

For the vast majority of the United States' 280 million plus citizens, the anthrax threat is very small.

In Colorado, there have been no confirmed cases of anthrax related to bioterrorism.

Consider these facts about the very real health risks facing us every day.



Tobacco

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, causing more than 400,000 deaths each year and resulting in an annual cost of more than \$50 billion in direct medical costs.

Tobacco contains 43 known cancer-causing chemicals.

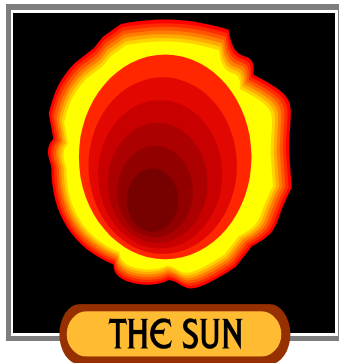
Cigarettes contain arsenic, a chemical found in rat poison.

Smoking kills more people each year than murder, alcohol, fires, HIV and car accidents combined.

Approximately 80% of adult smokers started smoking before the age of 18. Every day, nearly 3,000 young people under the age of 18 become regular smokers.

More than 5 million children living today will die prematurely because of a decision they will make as adolescents — the decision to smoke cigarettes.

In Jefferson County, Colorado, 23% of adults are regular smokers. From 1990 to 2000, we lost 1,696 county residents to lung cancer.



Skin Cancer

The number of skin cancer cases is increasing in the United States. More than 1 million cases of basal cell or squamous cell cancer will be diagnosed in 2001. The most serious form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma, is expected to be diagnosed in 51,400 persons in 2001.

Melanoma is the most common cancer among people 25 to 29 years old.

Exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays appears to be the most important environmental factor in developing skin cancer.

This makes skin cancer a largely preventable disease when sun protective practices and behaviors are consistently applied and utilized.

UV radiation is also a factor in the development of lip cancer, making sun protection even more important. UV rays from artificial sources of light, such as tanning beds and sun lamps are just as dangerous as those from the sun, and should also be avoided.

Despite the fact that both tanning and burning can increase one's risk of skin cancer, most Americans do not protect themselves from UV rays.

Between 1990 and 2000, 117 Jefferson County, Colorado residents died from malignant melanoma.



Breast and Cervical Cancer

Excluding skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among American women and is second only to lung cancer as the leading cause of cancer-related death. An estimated 192,200 new cases will be diagnosed among women in 2001, and 40,200 women will die of this disease.

The incidence of invasive cervical cancer has decreased significantly over the last 40 years, in large part because of early detection efforts.

Even so, an estimated 12,900 new cases will be diagnosed in 2001, and 4,400 women will die of this disease.

Between 1990 and 2000, 634 Jefferson County women died of breast cancer and 58 died of cervical cancer.



HIV/Aids

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that approximately 40,000 people per year in the United States continue to become infected with HIV. This number has remained relatively stable, but unacceptably high for much of the past decade.

HIV-related illness and death now have the greatest impact on young people.

AIDS is a leading cause of death among Americans 25- to 44-years-old. In this age group, AIDS is responsible for 1 in every 3 deaths among African-American men and 1 in 5 deaths in African-American women.

Between 1990 and 1995, AIDS incidence among people 13- to 25- years-old rose nearly 20%.

In Jefferson County: The following table provides a glimpse of public health threats the Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment have responded to in the year prior to October 1, 2001. Between October 1, 2000 and September 30, 2001, local and state public health department communicable disease control specialists have investigated and responded to 975 cases of infectious and reportable conditions among Jefferson County residents. Among those were:

Disease / Agent	# cases	Disease / Agent	# cases
Campylobacter	90	Cryptosporidiosis	4
E coli O157:H7	14	Aseptic Meningitis	60
Giardiasis	81	Bacterial Meningitis	4
Group A & B Strep Invasive	6	Meningococcal Disease	4
Hemophilus influenzae	6	Pertussis	82
Hepatitis A	6	Salmonellosis	58
Hepatitis B, Acute & Chronic	76	Shigella	21
Hepatitis C, Acute & Chronic	170	Streptococcus pneum invasive	76
Influenza	60		
Cryptosporidiosis	4		



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