

TABLE 2: Seven criteria determine the potency of a biological weapon

1. Virulence- the damage inflicted by the weapon must be severe, though not necessarily fatal;
2. Infectivity- the size of the dose required to initiate an infection (best if low dose for economy of distribution) including the method of dosing;
3. Stability- the organism must survive and remain infectious until it reaches the host;
4. The extent of natural immunity (the target population must have low immunity for the agent to be effective);
5. The availability of vaccines and other protective measures to the user, but not to the target;
6. The availability and ease of therapy (the organism should not be readily treatable by common anti-infective agents);
7. Transmissability, which is person to person spread of the disease (in warfare transmissability needs to be low to hit the target population and not start a worldwide pandemic. In terrorism, that approach may not be necessary.)

TABLE 3: Potential bioterrorist agents categorized by level of threat to public health

CATEGORY A	CATEGORY B	CATEGORY C
<i>Bacillus anthracis</i> (anthrax)	<i>Coxiella burnetti</i> (Q fever)	Nipah virus
<i>Clostridium botulinum</i> toxin (botulism)	<i>Brucella</i> species (brucellosis)	Hantaviruses
<i>Yersinia pestis</i> (plague)	<i>Burkholderia mallei</i> (glanders)	Tickborne encephalitis viruses
<i>Variola major</i> (smallpox)	Ricin toxin from <i>Ricinus Communis</i>	Yellow fever
<i>Francisella tularensis</i> (tularemia)	Toxin of <i>Clostridium perfringens</i>	Multidrug-resistant TB
Viral hemorrhagic fevers	<i>Staphylococcus enterotoxin B</i>	

Adapted from Lane and Fauci³