



Biological, Chemical and Nuclear Treatment Guidelines
Available for Free Download to PDA Devices
Prepare today by visiting www.IllinoisPoisonCenter.org/PEPID

If a biological, chemical or nuclear attack ever occurs, health care providers can be ready with life-saving information right in the palms of their hands. Thanks to a new program, health professionals and first-responders may now download complete biological, chemical, nuclear and radiation treatment guidelines to handheld personal digital devices (PDA) – free of charge.

“The guidelines will help doctors, nurses and other health care professionals immediately identify, treat and report a wide range of bioterrorist and chemical agents,” said Dr. Michael S. Wahl, managing medical director of the Illinois Poison Control Center (IPC). “The quicker we can respond, the better chance we have to save the lives of victims and prevent diseases from spreading.”

The guidelines give point-by-point instructions for identifying and treating potential bioterrorist agents, such as anthrax, smallpox, plague and ricin; chemical weapons, such as cyanide and nerve gas; and radiation sickness. The program also includes a terrorism-specific drug interaction generator which can alert clinicians about potential harmful interactions between antidotes used to combat malicious agents and other medications the patients already may be taking.

Health care professionals can access the treatment guidelines at the IPC Web site, www.IllinoisPoisonCenter.org/PEPID and download the program with a click of a button. The program works on the two most common PDA operating systems, Palm and PocketPC. The same content also is available on the poison center Web site in a Web-based program accessible through a personal computer.

“The Illinois Poison Center is excited to be a part of this project,” Dr. Wahl said. “It will increase the speed and effectiveness with which we can respond to terrorist threats.”

The program was developed by the IPC in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and PEPID LLC, a firm specializing in point-of-care clinical references. It is funded by a grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness program.

The downloadable treatment guidelines are part of a larger bioterrorism preparedness project the IPC has been working on with the Illinois Department of Public Health. Last year, the Illinois Poison Center helped create treatment guidelines for hospital emergency departments; a flip chart for EMS professionals; a poster listing out bioterrorism syndromes and their signs and symptoms; and fact sheets for the general public regarding potential bioterrorist and chemical agents. The poison center also conducts bioterrorism preparedness courses for health care professionals throughout the year. Visit www.IllinoisPoisonCenter.org (Information for Health Professionals section) for more information about the bioterrorism resources.