

# Joint Investigation of Inhalation Anthrax: Lessons Learned in Pennsylvania



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# Objectives

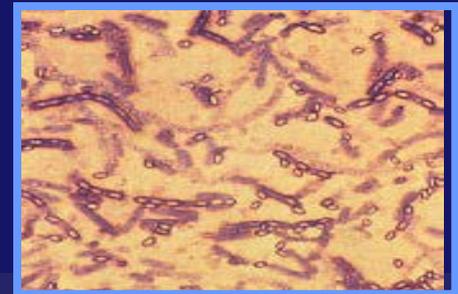
- Describe initial presentation of patient
- Describe sequence of events prior to interview
- Describe findings of joint criminal-epidemiological investigation
- Identify lessons learned in the joint investigation
- Provide recommendations for future joint investigations

# Clinical Presentation

- 2/16/06 – 44 yr old man collapsed at restaurant after performance at local university
- Admitted to small community hospital
- Patient complaints:
  - Worsening shortness of breath
  - Dry cough
  - Pleuritic chest pain
  - Malaise
- Clinical findings:
  - Pneumonia on x-ray
  - Good oxygenation
  - No fever
  - Normal blood counts

# Clinical Presentation

- 2/17/06 – Transferred to tertiary care facility due to worsening condition
- 2/20/06 – Blood cultures drawn at first hospital reported to PA Department of Health (DOH):
  - Gram positive rods
  - Non-motile
  - Non-hemolytic
  - \*Unencapsulated\*
- 2/21/06 – Diagnosis confirmed by PA DOH Laboratory
  - *Bacillus anthracis* by PCR and  $\gamma$ -phage lysis
- 2/22/06 – CDC identification
  - Genotype 1



# Preliminary Epidemiologic Information

- New York City resident
- Born in Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)
- Artistic director and performer in a West African performance company



# Preliminary Epidemiologic Information

- Crafts and repairs traditional African drums



- Recent history of travel to Côte d'Ivoire
  - Dates unclear

# Pre-Interview Agency Events

- PA DOH Laboratory contacted PA DOH Epidemiologists and FBI Philadelphia with preliminary positive anthrax specimen
- FBI Philadelphia contacted PA DOH Epi
- Field investigators share info known to date
- Timing of interviews planned



# Joint Crim-Epi Investigation

- Conducted on 2/22/06 and 2/23/06
- Interviewed patient's wife
  - Details about performances
  - General info on his travel
  - Vague info on drum making
- Patient
  - Details on drum making
  - Details about travel
  - Major barriers were poor medical condition and language
- Consents for search of NYC sites obtained first, faxed to FBI NYC
- Law enforcement prepared for evidence collection in PA

