

Medical Countermeasures Once the cause of disease is known, MCMs that effectively treat or prevent the disease can be utilized, if available. Effective use of MCMs during a biological incident will not only help reduce the spread of disease but also reduce incidences of illness, thus reducing the burden on healthcare systems; often, MCMs will be paired with NPIs. MCMs include materials used to prevent, mitigate, or treat adverse health effects, such as PrEP/PEP and therapeutics, diagnostic tests, and PPE. MCMs, such as antibiotics, antitoxins, vaccines, and antiviral drugs, can be used to treat patients with disease symptoms or to prevent and/or slow the development of disease in exposed or potentially exposed individuals. Prophylaxis may also be provided to individuals who are at high risk of being exposed during the response (e.g., first responders, human and veterinary healthcare providers, etc.) or those who were exposed but have yet to develop illness symptoms. PPE such as protective clothing (e.g., gloves, gowns, etc.), eye protection (e.g., face shields or goggles), and masks or respiratory protection (e.g., disposable filtering facepiece respirators and positive air purifying respirators) are additional examples of MCMs that may be employed during a biological incident. The type of PPE employed will depend on the characteristics of the biological agent involved (i.e., pathogens transmitted through inhalation versus environmental contact or other exposures).