Nuclear and Radiological Incident Scenarios

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is currently in the process of developing a handbook for the medical community entitled “Clinical Response to Nuclear and Radiological Incidents, Including Terrorism.” The appropriate medical response to such incidents is highly dependent on the type of incident that occurs. For example, if there is a nuclear bomb explosion or a nuclear power plant criticality, the administration of potassium iodide (KI) to people downwind of the event would be very helpful in the prevention of future thyroid disease. However, KI would be of no use in an event involving exposure to a lost radiation source. The medical community will need to be prepared to deal with contaminated patients for some incidents, but that won’t be necessary for others. In addition, the number of patients to expect and the extent of their injuries varies greatly, depending on the incident.

For this poster presentation, we have collected information relevant to appropriate medical response to nuclear and radiological incidents and summarized it on a table. This table will later be included in our handbook.