

Synthetic bioterrorism: US developing medical rapid response plan

The United States must prepare for surprise attacks at home and abroad from...the new, emerging and largely unknown consequences posed by synthetic biological threats, a senior defense official told House congressional members on [March 23].

Dr. Arthur T. Hopkins, acting assistant secretary for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs at the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), testified that..."emerging infectious diseases, synthetic biology and engineered diseases...[is] an area where we are focusing and we have to continue to focus."

...

"It's thinking about the biological threat that keeps me awake at night. It's cheap, available and easy to transmit pathogens," said U.S. Rep. Ralph Abraham (R-LA).

...

To counter such current and emerging threats, DOD's Chemical and Biological Defense Program is developing new strategies to more rapidly respond, especially in the area of medical countermeasures, Hopkins said.

...

"The primary thing is early detection of a problem and then getting ahead of the curve on dealing with the problem. Early detection and warning are where [federal budget] investments should be made," noted Peter Verga, the assistant secretary of defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Dept. of Defense aims countermeasures at WMD, synthetic biological threats](#)

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP on Wikipedia](#)