

## Is genetic engineering unleashing threat of increased bioterrorism and biological warfare?

As the realm of genetic engineering has advanced, tailored development of lethal and contagious pathogens is feasible, rendering biodefense a challenging phenomenon. The dark side of biotechnology or 'black biology' has made it attainable to create 'designer genes' that can be exploited as lethal bioweapons.

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According to WHO, bioweapon is a harmful micro-organism like bacteria, toxin, or virus, used as agents to spread infectious disease. Bio-weapons are extremely cheap when compared to the cost of a nuclear weapon program. As an example, a neuro-toxin 'botulinum' infamously known as 'miracle bio-poison', secreted by bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*, is known for its extreme lethality and potency.

According to research, 1 gram of crystalline toxin, if evenly circulated and inhaled, can kill more than one million people (Dhakad & Singh, 2010).

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There are those who say 'The First World War was chemical; the Second War was nuclear, and that the Third World War — God forbid — will be biological.'

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