



DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD, SUITE 5101
FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA 22042-5101

July 17, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR DOD PERSONNEL AND VETERANS

SUBJECT: Anthrax Vaccine and Long-Term Health Concerns

Thank you for contacting the Defense Health Agency's Immunization Healthcare Division regarding possible adverse health effects of anthrax vaccine.

The anthrax vaccine has been licensed by the Food and Drug Administration and used in the U.S. since 1970. It is given in accordance with guidance from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). In 2000 and 2002, Tulane University researchers published papers on concerns about anti-squalene antibodies found in some veterans who had received anthrax vaccine and who were suffering from "Gulf War Syndrome." These findings legitimately raised concern of a possible connection between anthrax vaccine and health problems.

However, as detailed on the attached document, intensive, high quality research by multiple distinguished groups subsequently proved that squalene was not intentionally added to the anthrax vaccine and that anti-squalene antibodies were not associated with Gulf War Syndrome or chronic multi-symptom illnesses. In 2006, the World Health Organization, among many others, "concurred that fears of squalene and vaccine-inducing pathological anti-squalene antibodies were unfounded." A Congressionally-directed comprehensive independent investigation in 2002 concluded the anthrax vaccine is acceptably safe and effective in preventing anthrax in humans.

Social media postings have unfortunately continued to resurrect these old concerns without acknowledging the subsequent research dispelling both the intentional use of squalene in any lots of anthrax vaccine and the connection of this adjuvant with chronic disease. The rumor in social media that the VA is starting to rate "100% disability" to any service member who received anthrax vaccine of a specific lot is unfounded. Please see attached scientific review and credible references on this topic.

If you have vaccine-related health concerns, please contact our team at 1-877-438-8222, press Option 1. See also: www.health.mil/vaccines. If you have questions about disability compensation, the web link to the US Veterans Benefits Administration is at: <https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>.

Chief, Immunization Healthcare Division
Deputy Assistant Director, Public Health
Assistant Director, Combat Support
Defense Health Agency