

The effect of the entrance of these virulent spores into an animal body, by whatever channel they enter, is to soon destroy the subject by their rapid indefinite multiplication and their pernicious action on the blood, which they deprive of its life-sustaining properties by absorbing the oxygen and obstructing the minute capillary circulation, death taking place in most cases instantaneously and without noticeable symptoms of illness.

Bollinger recognizes three different forms of anthrax as affecting the domestic animals:

1. Apoplectiform, which kills in from a few minutes to several hours.
2. Acute anthrax, lasting from a few hours to a few days.
3. Sub-acute forms of anthrax; all cases of a longer duration.

In the first and second forms the disease runs its course with remarkable rapidity, and animals so affected frequently die as if stricken by lightning, without having given rise to any previous suspicions regarding their condition.

In the third form the mortality exceeds 70 per cent.

The disease seldom affords opportunities for even experimental treatment.

In cattle and sheep the post mortem lesions consist of a black tar-like appearance of the blood which teems with bacilli, ecchymoses in most of the internal organs, especially the small intestines, mediastinum and mesentery, with great enlargement of the spleen which is distended with black tar-like blood. This organ is found in this condition in all cases of internal anthrax.

External anthrax is occasionally seen in horses and sheep, rarely in cattle, and is usually due to inoculation by flies. It is attended by local swelling which is hard and painful, and spreads rapidly to the surrounding parts, general infection takes place and the animal usually dies, the post mortem lesions being similar to those of intestinal anthrax.

The manner in which anthrax is spread should be well known. The bacilli require oxygen to sporulate, hence if the carcass is cut open and exposed to the air, spores form readily in the blood, and whatever is smeared with it immediately becomes infective; and ignorance of this fact is accountable for the careless disposal of carcasses of animals which have died from anthrax. It is too frequently the practice of farmers and others to drag a dead animal away from the buildings, perhaps across a pasture or hay field, and leave it unburied or only partially covered in a swamp or wood where it is easily reached by dogs and vermin, by which portions are dragged across fields, smearing the ground or grasses with spores of the bacillus.

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