

S U M M A R Y

The Internet has emerged as a global medium for information exchange. Previous studies related to enhancing transparency of biological research used the method of collateral analysis of scientific publications. Drawing on commercial on-line services, these studies documented the types of research carried on with certain materials in specific countries. This study examines the potential contribution of the Internet for enhancing transparency of information related to biological pathogens and toxins. The objectives of the study are to develop a map of biological and toxin resources on the Internet, and to assess this information using three case studies. These case studies include:

- cell collections of microorganisms on the Internet;
- research on Bacillus anthracis (the bacterium which causes anthrax);
- research on the Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis virus.

The following Internet sites create indices of information. They were used extensively and found to be the most useful for finding information:

- AltaVista (located at <http://www.altavista.com>);
- Lycos (located at <http://www.lycos.com>); and,
- Yahoo (located at <http://www.yahoo.com>).

As well, other search tools were tested such as WebCrawler, InfoSeek and Excite. These were found not to be as useful for biological and toxin information. Approximately half of the time connected to the Internet made use of the WebCompass Resource Discovery Agent (registered trademark of