

Safety Considerations in Recombinant DNA Research with Pathogenic Viruses

This meeting and development of the Points to Consider is the beginning of an ongoing process necessary to keep IBCs up to date with the scientific and medical advances they use to inform their containment decisions.

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The Points to Consider are meant to be a resource for IBCs not only for the infectious agents discussed at this meeting, but also to provide a framework for their deliberations of containment issues attendant to research with emerging infectious agents.

Safety Considerations in Recombinant DNA Research with Pathogenic Viruses

- Research into viral virulence mechanisms and the development of vaccines and antiviral drugs are public health priorities.
- While this research is of critical importance, it is equally important that the research be performed responsibly to protect the health of laboratory researchers and the public.

Overarching Principles

- A process needs to be established whereby IBCs can share information and their experiences in determining appropriate biosafety containment levels.
- Education, formal training, and mentoring of personnel who work with infectious agents is paramount to ensure appropriate biosafety practices are followed.
- Appropriate Institutional support and oversight is necessary for IBCs to function optimally.

Future Efforts to help IBCs and Investigators

- OBA has and will continue to provide educational programs and assistance to IBCs.
- The 5th revision of the Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL) is in progress and will provide specific guidance for influenza and is a collaborative process between the HHS and USDA.