

## **CBRN Protection:**

The Medical Countermeasures (MCM) Directorate assists in protecting U.S. forces that are globally engaged and at potentially increased risk to being exposed to naturally occurring substances or encountering manufactured chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) agents that adversaries may seek to use against them.

MCM ensures that only the safest and most effective medical countermeasures to these environmental or manmade threats are available to Service members so that they may operate successfully in domestic and international settings. With the identification of any CBRN threat, the MCM directorate develops DoD-wide policies and recommendations on who should be administered vaccines or medicines to counter those threats and also helps determine the latest and best medical products available for use by war fighters who may deploy to high CBRN risk areas.

The MCM directorate takes a proactive, preventive medicine approach to protect Service members and their families who may be stationed or deployed in areas at elevated risk to both naturally occurring and manufactured CBRN hazards and emerging infectious diseases. These efforts include working with both military and civilian public health partners on a seasonal flu vaccination program, development of malaria prophylaxes, management of the department's smallpox and anthrax vaccination policies, and ensuring effective preventive measures are in place to address unique region-specific and common tropical illnesses such as Japanese encephalitis and leishmaniasis.

MCM additionally interacts with DoD's Chemical and Biological Defense Program, assisting in the development of medical countermeasure requirements, acquisition processes and product evaluations, as well as in determining appropriate stockpiling to ensure that safe, effective medicines are in place and available when needed for Service members and their families at home and those who are deployed throughout the world.



Abner Radillo, left, with USAID, and Erling Alvarez, assigned to the U.S. Embassy, process their co-workers through a decontamination line following a major accident response exercise held in Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, April 19, 2007. Thirty-eight students attended the class, which provided training, focusing mainly on first aid techniques, and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive readiness training, including how to don the chemical protection suit. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Sonny Cohrs/Released)