Life Threatening Infection Seen in Heroin Users

3 King County residents who inject black tar heroin by muscling have died. Health officials believe they died of infection caused by *Clostridium*. This bacteria causes muscle tissue to die and toxins to spread in the body.

It is not known if *Clostridium* is in dope, the cut, or passed in other ways.

Cooking the dope will NOT kill it!!

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**What do symptoms look & feel like?**

- Skin around the injection site will get red and swell or become numb.
- Skin will feel warm and tender.
- There may be pain.
- The infection may ooze a brown to blood-colored watery discharge.
- At the beginning, it may look like a regular abscess, but it gets worse very quickly (a few hours).

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If this infection is caught early, it can be treated. But it is very important to catch it early and begin treatment … immediately!

If you have any of the symptoms, **Go to the nearest EMERGENCY ROOM…immediately!!!**

Take this flyer with you so you will be seen quickly.

Do not try to treat this infection yourself!

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Public Health
Seattle & King County
HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

March 1, 2004

Alternative Formats Available