

Risk Group Classification

Risk Group Classification	NIH Guidelines	World Health Organization (WHO) Guidelines
Risk Group 1	(No or low individual and community risk) Agents not associated with disease in health adult humans	(No or low individual and community risk) A microorganism unlikely to cause human or animal disease
Risk Group 2	(Moderate individual risk; low community risk) Agents associated with human disease that is rarely serious and for which preventive or therapeutic interventions are often available.	(Moderate individual risk; low community risk) A pathogen that can cause human or animal disease but is unlikely to be a serious hazard to laboratory workers, the community, livestock, or the environment. Laboratory exposures may cause serious infection, but effective treatment and preventive measures are available and the risk of spread in infection is limited.
Risk Group 3	(High individual risk but low community risk) Agents associated with serious or lethal human disease for which preventive or therapeutic interventions may be available	(High individual risk; low community risk) A pathogen that usually causes serious human or animal disease but does not ordinarily spread from one infected individual to another. Effective treatment and preventive measures are available
Risk Group 4	(High individual and community risk) Agents likely to cause serious or lethal human disease for which preventive or therapeutic interventions are not usually available (high individual risk and high community risk)	(High individual and community risk) A pathogen that usually causes serious human or animal disease and can be readily transmitted from one individual to another, directly or indirectly. Effective treatment and preventive measures are not usually available.

*This chart came from the Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories 5th Edition.