



Informed®



Home Emergency Pocket Guide™

**A Practical Guide for
Preparedness and Survival**

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Info and Planning

Emergency Reference, Preparedness Kits



Emergency

CPR, Heimlich, Drowning, Shock



Glossary

Bleeding, Contamination, Sprains



Disasters

Earthquake, Hurricane, Fire, Flood



Survival

Assessing Danger, Food & Water

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USING THIS GUIDE

This Informed Guide contains information critical to aiding you through a multitude of situations, including emergencies and disasters. Having the following resources available may save you time, in the event of an emergency:

- ✓ **Medical History**
- ✓ **Emergency Numbers and References**
- ✓ **Home Evacuation Plan and Routes**
- ✓ **Disaster Planning**
- ✓ **First Aid Kit**
- ✓ **Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Kit**
- ✓ **Pet Emergencies**
- ✓ **Household Preparedness**

Emergency

Use the Emergency section to familiarize yourself with conditions that might demand critical response time or life-saving first aid. Learn how to recognize conditions, react, and what you can do to prevent an emergency from occurring. The Emergency and First Aid section will help prepare you for a multitude of emergencies that may occur, including:

- ✓ **ABCs, Vital Signs**
- ✓ **Bleeding**
- ✓ **Burns**
- ✓ **Choking/Heimlich**
- ✓ **Childbirth**
- ✓ **CPR**
- ✓ **Drowning**
- ✓ **Heart Attack**
- ✓ **Poisoning**
- ✓ **Seizure**
- ✓ **Severe Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis)**
- ✓ **Shock**
- ✓ **Stroke**

Glossary

This section documents a variety of signs and conditions that may occur in various environments and situations. Each condition or symptom is described with an indication of severity, as well as how to assist you. The Glossary contains:

- ✓ **Bleeding**
- ✓ **Fainting**
- ✓ **Frostbite**
- ✓ **Head Injury**
- ✓ **Heat Stroke**
- ✓ **Snakebite**
- ✓ **Sprains**
- ✓ **Wound Care**

Disasters

Disasters are either natural or man-made events that are responsible for significant damage or destruction to property, the environment, and/or living things. Disasters include weather-related events (such as earthquakes or hurricanes), accidents (such as fires), and tragic events (such as terrorist attacks).

- ✓ **Earthquake**
- ✓ **Fire**
- ✓ **Flood**
- ✓ **Hazardous Material**
- ✓ **Hurricane**
- ✓ **Tornado**
- ✓ **Tsunami**

Survival

Survival means staying alive in the face of danger, accidents, and difficult situations. These may be known risks (e.g., hiking a dangerous area or unexpected (e.g., extreme weather or an assault). Refer to this section of the guide for information on the following:

- ✓ **Assessing Danger**
- ✓ **Basic Survival**
- ✓ **Extreme Weather**
- ✓ **Food and Water**
- ✓ **Navigating to Safety**
- ✓ **Preparedness**
- ✓ **Signaling for Help (SOS)**
- ✓ **Survival in Your Home/Office/Car**
- ✓ **What to Bring and Wear**

Emergency Contact Information



Fill this form out and make a copy for each Personal Evacuation Kit plus in the glove compartment of each your vehicles.

Name(s) of Adult(s)	
Name(s) of Child(ren)	
Names of Pet(s)	
Home Address	
Business Address	
School Address	
Home Phone Number	
Cell Phone Numbers	
Local Emergency Contact(s)	
Out-of-Area Contact(s)	
Meeting Locations	

Out of Area Contacts


In a disaster local phone service may be disrupted; however, calling outside the local area may be possible. This will allow you to communicate with your loved ones via your **out-of-area contact**.

Name _____

City: _____ State: _____

Phone numbers: _____

E-mail address: _____

 Write this information on a card and have it laminated at a copy shop. Give one to each family member to carry in his or her wallet.

Emergency Contacts

Nearest Relative (not living with you)

Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Phone numbers: _____

E-mail address: _____

Family Phone Numbers

Father's work: _____ Father's cell: _____

Mother's work: _____ Mother's cell: _____

Child(ren)'s cell(s): _____

Other: _____

Family Medical History



Keep this book in a secure place to safeguard your personal information.

Family Member 1 Name _____

Birthday _____ Age _____ Sex _____

Allergies _____

Current medical conditions (include pregnancy)

Current medications and doses

Location of medications

Major surgeries (with dates)

Family Member 2 Name _____

Birthday _____ Age _____ Sex _____

Allergies _____

Current medical conditions (include pregnancy)

Current medications and doses

Location of medications

Major surgeries (with dates)

Family Member 3 Name _____

Birthday _____ Age _____ Sex _____

Allergies _____

Current medical conditions (include pregnancy)

Current medications and doses

Location of medications

Major surgeries (with dates)

Family Member 4 Name _____

Birthday _____ Age _____ Sex _____

Allergies _____

Current medical conditions (include pregnancy)

Current medications and doses

Location of medications

Major surgeries (with dates)

Your Local Information

Nearby Shelters

Evacuation Routes

Warning Signals

Home Evacuation

Your **Safe Locations** (where you can take cover):

Your **PRIMARY** meeting place **INSIDE** the house:

Your **PRIMARY** meeting place **OUTSIDE** the house:

Emergency Resources

American Red Cross

202-303-4498

<http://www.redcross.org> <http://disastersafe.redcross.org>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

800-232-4636

<http://www.cdc.gov>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

800-621-3362

<http://www.fema.gov> <http://disasterhelp.gov>

Humane Society of the US (HSUS)

202-452-1100

<http://www.hsus.org>

National Weather Service

202-482-6090

<http://www.weather.gov>

Ready.gov

202-282-8000

<http://www.ready.gov>

National Weather Websites

National Weather Service www.nws.noaa.gov

The Weather Channel www.weather.com

Emergency Resources in Spanish

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/foreignmat/clrbksp.pdf

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/foreignmat/Fdpspan.pdf

FEMA. Preparación para casos de desastre.

www.fema.gov/txt/library/spa_pfd475.txt

FEMA. Como ayudar a los niños a confrontar una catástrofe.

www.fema.gov/txt/library/spa_children478.txt

Llame a FEMA al 800-480-2520

Resources for the Hearing Impaired

American Red Cross

Sign Language for Emergency Situations

<http://www.prepare.org/disabilities/signlanguage.pdf>

National Severe Storms Laboratory/ National Weather Service

Special-Needs NOAA Weather Radio for Deaf and
Hard-of-Hearing Individuals

<http://www.nssl.noaa.gov/NWR>

Contacting FEMA

To apply for federal disaster aid, **gather the following information:**

- Your immediate **emergency needs** (shelter, clothing, food, etc.).
- Your **Social Security Number** and home phone number.
- Directions to the damaged property.
- Date of loss—month and day.
- Current gross family income.
- If the damaged property is a primary residence or secondary residence.
- Name and type of any insurance, the insurance company, the agent's name and phone number.
- A general idea of the damage.

Call FEMA at 1-800-462-9029 and register your claim through the teleregistration system. The TDD (for the hearing impaired) number is: 1-800-462-7585.

Before you end the phone call, be sure you **ask for a Control Number**. This is the number that will be assigned to your loss/claim. If you do not obtain this number or have misplaced this number, **call the HELP LINE** number assigned to the disaster.



If you are not living at the damaged property, be prepared to give two alternate phone numbers.


PLANNING

This section contains information you will need to prepare for virtually any disaster. Take the time now to read this section with your family, your partner, or your neighbors, and make your plan. When facing a crisis later, you'll be glad you did.

- ✓ **Create a Disaster Plan**
- ✓ **Family Medical History**
- ✓ **Shelter-in-Place Kit**
- ✓ **Personal Evacuation Kit**
- ✓ **Home First Aid Kit**
- ✓ **Portable First Aid Kit**
- ✓ **Evacuation & Communications**
- ✓ **Put Your Plan Into Action**

Create a Disaster Plan

- Your first step in preparedness is to create a **disaster plan**. Follow the instructions in this section, collect and write down the necessary information, perform a home walk-through, and assemble the information and materials you need.
- Once you have done the preliminary work, **meet with your family and friends** to discuss disaster preparation, as well as discuss what each family member should do during a disaster.

 When speaking with small children, try not to alarm them about the potential of disaster. Speak to them calmly and explain that preparation is something you do "just in case," and assure them that everything will be fine, even if a disaster does strike.

- Once your plan is in place, **review it on a regular basis** or any time something changes in your family, such as relocation or a child entering a new school.
- Do not forget to include your pets in your disaster plan.

Planning Varies by Region

Each area in the U.S. has **different types of natural disasters**. If you are new to an area, or are unfamiliar with common disaster risks, follow these steps:

- Contact your local Red Cross** chapter or emergency management office for local information.
- Ask what types of disasters are **most common locally** and request location-specific information on how to prepare for each.
- Locate nearby shelters** and a mandated evacuation route.
- Learn about your community's warning signals**—what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.

Prepare Your Home

- Secure your hot water tank** to the wall studs. It can be a valuable source of fresh water after a disaster.
- Secure kitchen cabinets** and install child-proof latches to keep doors closed.
- Secure chemicals** under the kitchen sink or in the garage. Cover shelves with nylon webbing.
- Remove heavy objects** from upper shelves in your garage, especially near the car.
- Consider adding a safety film** to windows that are non-safety glass. This does not prevent the window from breaking, but it will keep it contained.
- Inspect all exposed framing** in garages, basements, porches, etc. Strengthen weak sections with metal connectors.

Portable First Aid Kit

Choose a container for your kit that is **roomy, durable, easy to carry, and simple to open**. Plastic tackle boxes or containers for storing art supplies are ideal.

Include the following in your portable first aid kit:

- Sterile gauze
- Adhesive tape
- Adhesive bandages in several sizes
- Elastic bandage
- Antiseptic wipes
- Soap
- Antibiotic cream (triple-antibiotic ointment)
- Antiseptic solution (like hydrogen peroxide)
- Hydrocortisone cream (1%)
- Acetaminophen and ibuprofen
- Extra prescription medications
- Tweezers
- Sharp scissors
- Safety pins
- Disposable instant cold packs
- Calamine lotion
- Alcohol wipes or ethyl alcohol
- Thermometer
- Plastic gloves (at least two pairs)
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Mouthpiece for administering CPR (can be obtained from your local Red Cross)
- Your list of emergency phone numbers
- Blanket (stored nearby)

Home First Aid Kit

The American College of Emergency Physicians recommends including the following items in your **Home First Aid Kit**.


For the kit itself, **choose a container that is clean, roomy, durable, easy to carry** and simple to open. Medicines should be stored in their containers and properly marked with dosage and instructions on how and when to take them. The kit should also include a list of the contents.

Store first aid kits in places that **children cannot reach but are easily accessible for adult family members**. Check the kit regularly to replace missing items and make sure that items have not passed their expiration dates. **The kit should contain the following:**

- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and aspirin tablets
- Cough suppressant
- Antihistamine
- Decongestant tablets
- Oral medicine syringe (for children)
- Bandages of assorted sizes
- Bandage closures; safety pins
- Triangular bandage
- Elastic wraps
- Gauze and adhesive tapes
- Sharp scissors with rounded tips
- Antiseptic wipes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Disposable, instant-activating cold packs
- Tweezers

Shelter-in-Place Kit

Disasters strike quickly and without warning, and can confine you to your home. Be prepared.

 Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away. During an emergency, you may not be able to access help for seventy-two hours or longer. The Shelter-in-Place Kit helps provide self-sufficiency and comfort.

Events that trigger Shelter-In-Place orders include:

- ✓ Terrorist attack
- ✓ Biological agents
- ✓ Chemical agents
- ✓ Radiological releases
- ✓ Overturned chemical truck
- ✓ Train derailment
- ✓ Pipeline rupture
- ✓ Emergency drills, particularly if you live in a potential HazMat release area

Your Shelter-In-Place Kit should include:

- Portable battery-operated U.S. Emergency All-Hazards and EAS weather radio, preferably with NOAA channels, with extra batteries
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape, pre-cut to fit all windows
- Scissors or a sharp knife
- Drinking water for three days
- Cloth towels (if you are not sheltering in the bathroom)
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Non-perishable dry snack foods for three days
- First aid kit
- Personal medications
- HEPA, N95 or Air-Aide mask
- Your plan(s) checklist

Personal Evacuation Kit

In addition to your Shelter-in-Place Kit, each person and pet in your family should have a Personal Evacuation Kit. It should be small and portable so that each family member can carry his/her own.

- 1 Buy a **daypack for each person** in your family. If you have a large dog, consider a daypack that stores food and water for your pet.
- 2 **Divide up all of the items** between the family members' daypacks. Because children can't carry as much as adults, you may want to keep a master list of all the items necessary for your family, and divide them across all adult members.



Make copies of important records and keep them in a waterproof, portable container.

- Health insurance cards
 - Birth certificates
 - Homeowners insurance policy
 - Inventory of valuable household goods
 - Car insurance
 - Social security cards
 - Wills
 - Driver's Licenses
 - Bank account numbers
 - Credit card companies and account numbers
 - Passports
 - Immunization records
- 3 Write down all **bank account and credit card numbers** and store them in a safe place where only you and family members and trusted friends can access them.

Out-of-Town Evacuation Routes

- Pick an **out of town meeting place** in case family members become separated. This can be a relative's home in another city, a hotel, or well-known landmark.
- Map out at least two ways** to drive to your meeting place.
- Practice evacuating** your home and driving your evacuation routes twice a year. Plot alternate routes along the way, in case your chosen roads are impassable or grid-locked.


At Home and Neighborhood Meeting Places

Note safe places inside and outside your house to meet.

- Your **PRIMARY** meeting place **INSIDE** the house:
-

- Your **PRIMARY** meeting place **OUTSIDE** the house:
-

- Additionally, list one **NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE** here in case you cannot get to your home:
-

 After a disaster, it may be impossible for family members to return home. It is important that you have all decided on a meeting place in your community where you can rejoin the members of your household.

- Lastly, select a **second ROUTE** from your neighborhood, in case you are forced to leave the area.
-

Put Your Plan Into Action


- Post emergency phone numbers** near your phones.
- Teach your children** how and when to call 911 or your local emergency number for help.
- Show each family member** how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity.
- Make sure you have **adequate insurance** coverage.
- Have **at least one ABC-type fire extinguisher** in your home, teach each family member how to use it, and show them where it is kept.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s)** according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Install smoke detectors** on each level of your home.
- Test your smoke detectors monthly. Change the batteries every six months and clean the dust off the detector at that time.
- Take a First Aid and CPR class.**
- Find safe spots in your home to escape from each type of disaster.
- Practice fire and emergency evacuation drills.**
- Replace stored water and food every six months.
- Check once a year to make sure the clothes you put in your personal evacuation kit still fit you.



Review your disaster preparedness plan every six months so each family member knows what to do.


Pets

Our animals depend on us for their safety and well-being. When evacuating, **take your pets with you if at all possible**. If your home is not safe for you, it is not safe for your pets.

 At the time of printing, state and federal laws have recently passed that will provide for animals in case of disaster; however, few states have implemented any specific changes. In the meantime, continue to **check with your local Humane Society to see if they will take pets** or to see if new provisions have been put in place in your state.

Make sure your pet is safe by:

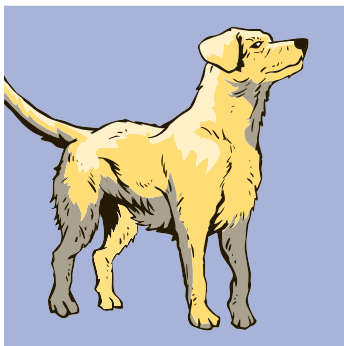
- Licensing your pet** and make sure a collar containing identifying information is in place at all times.
- Updating microchip information** (valid contact number and address) when applicable.
- Putting information by the front entrance to your home with information about the pets you have.
- Ensuring your pet is current on all necessary **vaccinations** and boosters and storing these records in his Personal Evacuation Kit.
- Having a crate or carrier for transport (one for each animal, if possible).
- Having a **Pet Evacuation Kit** that contains: medications (stored in a waterproof container), a pet first aid kit, sturdy leash and harness for dogs and cats, a current photo of the pet, food and potable water for at least three days, bowls, cat litter/pan, manual can opener, a pet bed, toys and information on the pet's feeding schedule, medical conditions, behavior problems and the name and phone number of your veterinarian.

 Pets can be overcome with fear during a disaster. Approach all pets—including yours—with caution. If your pet is injured or frightened, carefully cover its head and gently lift. Consider lightly wrapping a cloth around its muzzle to prevent nipping.



Mammalian pets (dogs, cats, etc.) need at least 1.5 cups of water per day per 10 pounds.

- ❑ **Marking your pet's kennel** with its name, species, a short description, and your address and phone numbers.
- ❑ Locating a place where you can take your pet for safe-keeping if you need to evacuate. Check your local shelter and one or two **shelters outside your area** to see if they will board your pet during a disaster.
- ❑ Locating a shelter that will take your family and your pets. Find two or three **hotels that will accept pets**, from your area, within driving distance and consider staying there during a disaster until you can return home with your family and pets.
- ❑ Arranging ahead of time for a neighbor to check on your pets and/or take them in if there is a disaster and you are not home. Make sure this person is familiar with your pet(s), and advise the neighbor where you keep your pet's Emergency Evacuation Kit.



Heimlich for Small Dogs and Cats



- 1 Place the pet against your stomach, with your pet's back against you, head up and legs hanging downward.
- 2 Create a fist with one hand, placing it under the last rib in the hollow space just under the rib cage area.

- 3 Press the fist inward and upward simultaneously, quickly and firmly.
- 4 Release and repeat.

Heimlich for Large Dogs



- 1 Straddle the dog from behind.
- 2 Wrap arms around dog (as pictured).
- 3 Place your fist just behind the last rib in the center.
- 4 Push sharply up and forward in several quick movements.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

The traditional order for CPR is the simple acronym ABC:

- Establish an **Airway**
- Support **Breathing**
- Get the **Circulation** going



- 1 Check for breathing by watching for the rise and fall of the chest. Check for a pulse.

Check vital signs and contact a veterinary clinic immediately.



If your pet is breathing, do not administer CPR!

2 If the animal is not breathing, gently move your pet onto its side.



3 Establish airway: do a finger sweep to check the nose and throat for foreign substances, then move the tongue from the back of the throat. Cup your hands over the nose and mouth to form a seal.



4 Breathe for the animal by blowing air into the nostrils. Begin with two long breaths (1.5–2 seconds each). If the animal does not begin to breathe within 5–7 seconds, breathe 12–20 times per minute (20–25 breaths per minute for small animals).



5 If after five breaths the pet remains unconscious, begin compressions. Place both hands (one on top of the other) on the chest, and press down sharply using the heel of hand (not fingertips). Every fifteen chest compressions, give the animal two breaths.

6 Continue efforts to resuscitate until the animal breathes naturally, or until no heartbeat is felt for five minutes.

Transport



Survey the severity of the emergency before moving an animal. In some cases, an animal may further injure itself by attempting to move. In extreme or severe cases, an animal may not be physically able to move.

Use your judgement to the best of your ability, and always approach an injured animal

with caution. If there is a known bone injury, move the animal as minimally as possible. For cats and dogs, use a board for transport. Slide the animal onto a board, cover with a blanket or towel, and safely secure with the belts, panty hose, or cord. If possible, place an animal with its injured side down, and position the head naturally. Cats respond better to being transported in a small carrier, as being strapped to a board may cause panic.



If you suspect a spinal cord injury, using a board for animal transport is absolutely essential.

HOUSEHOLD PREPAREDNESS

Every home has areas that are safer than others during a disaster. As part of your safety walkthrough, **identify and correct the following dangers**:

- ✓ **Beds under windows.** Move beds out from under windows that could break in a disaster.
- ✓ **Beds below heavy mirrors, framed pictures, hanging plants.** Heavy objects can fall during a disaster.
- ✓ **Breakable or heavy objects on shelves.** Consider a cabinet with latching doors. Use museum wax to secure fragile items in place.
- ✓ **Loose latches, such as magnetic push latches, on cabinets and cupboards.** Cabinets can swing open during a disaster causing contents to spill.
- ✓ **Glass bottles in medicine cabinets.** Put glass containers on lower shelves or near the back.
- ✓ **Flammable materials close to heat sources.** Painting or cleaning products should be stored in the garage or an outdoor shed.
- ✓ **Heavy or glass objects next to exits** or escape routes in your home. Move them for easy exit.
- ✓ **Objects with wheels.** These can roll during a disaster. Block the wheels.
- ✓ **Dead or diseased tree limbs near the house.** Tree limbs can fall and damage the house or hurt people.
- ✓ **Brush, dry grasses, or overhanging trees** within forty feet of your house.
- ✓ **Unreinforced masonry** that could fall during high winds or earthquakes (chimneys in particular).

Finally, decide and discuss with your family where the **safe and unsafe areas** are in your home. Decide where you should meet inside and outside the home when disaster strikes.

Home Walk-Through

Do a thorough walk-through once a year to check and record the safety of your dwelling. Start by identifying and recording the following:

Water shut-off:

- ❑ Identify where your water shut-off is. It is generally in the meter box near the curb, or on the perimeter of your house. Test that you can turn the water off successfully.

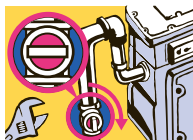
Record the location here:




Gas shut-off:

- ❑ Identify where your gas shut-off is. It is generally on the perimeter of your building about two feet off the ground.

Record the location here:




 Many utility companies recommend NOT turning off gas to your house unless you smell an actual leak, as it may take some time to reinstate service.

Electrical shut-off:

- ❑ Identify where your electrical panel is. It may be inside or outside of the house. In the electrical panel, locate the main power breakers. There are generally two such breakers.

Record the location here:



 Be familiar with your insurance policy. A home that is not covered for a primary event (earthquake) may be covered under a secondary event (fire).

POWER OUTAGE



If power outages are common in your area, or if you or a family member has special needs that require power, **consider purchasing a generator**. Hire a licensed electrician to install it and learn how to use and maintain it.

Power Outage Preparedness

- Make sure you have an **alternate heat source** and supply of fuel.
- Learn how to **protect your perishable** foods and when to discard them.
- Know when and how to turn off your utilities. See **Home Walk-Through**.
- Consider purchasing rechargeable plug-in lights that turn on when the power is interrupted.
- Keep working flashlights, candles, and lighters or matches in every room of the house.
- Register life-sustaining equipment with your power company.

During a Power Outage

- If you use a kerosene heater, gas lantern, or stove inside the house, maintain ventilation to avoid a buildup of toxic fumes.
- In winter, keep doors and windows closed; in summer, keep them open.
- DO NOT USE** charcoal inside. Burning charcoal inside can cause lethal carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer closed** to retain the cold as long as possible.
- Discard any food that is suspect. Remember, **when in doubt, throw it out**.
- Follow advisories from your local government and utility company, particularly if there is a gradual restoration of power or the likelihood of continuing rolling blackouts.

EMERGENCY

**What Is an Emergency?**

A medical emergency is a situation that may result in a serious disability (or sometimes death), unless immediate help is received. In a life-or-death situation, just a few minutes can make an important difference.

In some cases, you may be able to provide part or all of the help needed. Other situations will call for immediate professional assistance. This section will help you distinguish between the two, and help you work quickly, safely, and efficiently.

In the event of an emergency, **never hesitate to dial 911. If a situation appears too serious, or you doubt your ability to act, always leave care in the hands of a professional.**



Dispatch emergency rescue responders before administering first aid.

When someone appears to be in distress, check:

- Is there **something obviously wrong**? A fall, blow, or an impact involving the head or neck?
- Is there a **visible injury**? Head, chest, or belly trauma, bleeding, broken bones?
- Is there a **significant complaint**? Chest pain/pressure, trouble breathing, headache?
- Does the person look and/or sound normal? Unusual appearance, skin color, slurred speech?

Determine a plan of action, depending on your assessment.

Call out for others to help, then:

- ✓ Provide **ABCs** (see **ABCs Check and Care**)
- ✓ Treat **breathing/heart emergencies**
- ✓ Treat **bleeding/injuries**
- ✓ **Call 911** and give name, phone number, address/location, type of emergency.



Be aware that you need to take care of yourself. Do what you can, but be aware of—and respect—your limits.

Emergency Conditions

The following conditions may signify an emergency:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| ✓ Abdominal Pain | ✓ Heart Attack |
| ✓ Breathing Difficulty | ✓ Loss of Consciousness |
| ✓ Broken Bones | ✓ Poisoning |
| ✓ Burns | ✓ Seizures |
| ✓ Car Accidents | ✓ Severe Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis) |
| ✓ Choking | ✓ Shock |
| ✓ Drowning | ✓ Stroke |
| ✓ Electrical Shock | ✓ Uncontrolled Bleeding |
| ✓ Frostbite | |

ABCs Check and Care

1. **First**, check:

Is the person responsive?

- Airway is open (person is not choking), person is breathing, heart is beating.

2. **Is the person unresponsive?**

- If face down, carefully extend one arm over head, and gently “**log roll**” person over the extended arm by gently tugging on the non-extended shoulder.
- If/once face up, support head and neck, if possible.

3. **Next**, follow these steps to provide “**ABCs**” care:

A = Airway:

- **Lift the chin** as you tilt the head back.
- Check to **ensure mouth is empty**.
- Are there **signs of choking?** (Hands to throat?)

B = Breathing:

- **Look at chest** and belly for movement.
- **Feel for breathing** by placing hand over nose/mouth.

C = Circulation:

- **Check carotid pulse**. The carotid is just below the jaw along the windpipe and the throat. Use tips of index and middle fingers and press gently.
- Check for obvious and significant bleeding.



CALL 911, BEGIN RESCUE BREATHING IF PERSON NOT BREATHING, AND BEGIN CPR IF NO PULSE.

- ❑ **S = Spine:**
 - Has person **received a blow** to the head or fallen?
 - Is person **able to move arms, legs, head**?
 - Does person have **tingling** in arms, legs?
 - Is there **significant pain** in neck or back?
 - Is there **fluid or blood** from ears, nose, mouth?

Vital Signs

Vital Signs Include:

- ✓ Body temperature
- ✓ Respiratory rate and kind of breathing
- ✓ Heart rate and rhythm
- ✓ Pulse rate

Normal Vital Signs



The following vital signs are “at rest,” when a person is calm and has been still for several minutes.


- ❑ **Adult (over age 8)**
 - ✓ Heart rate (pulse): 60–100 beats/minute
 - ✓ Respiration: 12–20 breaths/minute
- ❑ **Child (age 1–8)**
 - ✓ Heart rate (pulse): 80–120 beats/minute
 - ✓ Respiration: 18–24 breaths/minute
- ❑ **Infant (birth–1 year)**
 - ✓ Heart rate (pulse): 140–160 beats/minute
 - ✓ Respiration: 30–40 breaths/minute

Choking (Heimlich)

Symptoms

- Inability to speak or cough
- Blueness to skin color
- Clutching neck with hands (universal sign)

Treatment

 If the person can speak, **DO NOT INTERFERE**. Encourage the person to continue to cough to clear his or her airway.

If choking:

- ✓ Call 911—confirm need (“Are you choking?”).
- ✓ Stand behind person.
- ✓ **Wrap arms around person. Position fist** between navel and lower notch of breastbone.
- ✓ **Pull up and in forcefully** until person expels object.
- ✓ If person collapses, begin CPR.



If choking (for large person/pregnant):

- ✓ **Confirm need** if conscious (“Are you choking?”)
- ✓ Stand **behind person**.
- ✓ Wrap arms around person. Position fist **ON breastbone**.
- ✓ Pull and squeeze forcefully until person expels object.

If choking (infant under 11 months):

- ✓ Lay infant **face and head-down** on forearm, cradling chin in hand.
- ✓ With open palm, **hit on upper back** between shoulder blades 5 times.
- ✓ If still choking, **turn the infant over**.
- ✓ Use two fingers and thrust five times on breastbone. If unsuccessful, attempt to ventilate twice. If unsuccessful, repeat back blows, chest thrusts, and ventilations. If infant becomes unconscious, begin CPR.



CPR for Cardiac Arrest

If the person is not breathing (Cardiac Arrest):

1. Place the **heel of your hand on the breastbone**, in the middle of the chest, between the nipples. Then, stack your second hand on top of your first, with fingers aligned.
2. **Depress the chest** approximately 1½ to 2 inches and then allow the chest to return to its normal position—repeat 30 times @ 100 per minute
3. **Provide high-quality chest compressions of adequate rate and depth with minimal interruptions until:**
 - Medical professionals arrive
 - The person begins breathing on his or her own
 - You are too exhausted to continue



! As a result of studies in 2007, the American Heart Association determined that hands-only CPR was acceptable for bystanders performing on cardiac arrest victims. These studies did not indicate a negative impact on a victim's survival when mouth-to-mouth was not used.

CPR for Special Circumstances

CPR for Infants (birth to 1 year)

- ✓ Use **two fingers** for chest compressions.
- ✓ Position fingers **on center of chest**.
- ✓ **Compress 15 times @ 100 per min.**
- ✓ Cover **mouth and nose** with your mouth.
- ✓ **Ventilate with 2 “puffs”** of breath to avoid over-expanding lungs.
- ✓ Use **15:2 ratio**.



CPR for Children (1 year to 8 years)

- ✓ Compress the **lower half of the breastbone 30 times** with the heel of 1 hand or with 2 hands, but do not press on the bottom end of the breastbone or the ribs.
- ✓ Compress the chest **about one third to one half** the depth of the chest @ 100 per minute.
- ✓ **Ventilate** until you see the child's chest rise.
- ✓ Use **30:2 ratio**.

CPR for Drowning Victims

- ✓ Remove victim from water and call for help, if available.
- ✓ Provide **CPR** as normal.
- ✓ Give **five cycles** (about two minutes) of CPR before leaving the victim to call for help.
- ✓ Get **medical attention** for victim.

CPR for Hypothermia Victims

- ✓ Remember that the brain needs less oxygen when cold. Do not give up without trying **CPR**.
- ✓ **Remove wet clothes** from the victim; insulate or shield the victim from wind, heat, or cold.
- ✓ Perform **CPR** as indicated by age of victim.
- ✓ If possible, have helpers begin to warm victim while you are performing CPR.

If choking, YOU:

- ✓ Draw attention to yourself.
- ✓ **Throw yourself over a chair** or onto the corner of a table or desk in an effort to “**Heimlich**” yourself.

! A person can survive a cracked breastbone. They cannot survive without air.

Difficulty Breathing

Breathing difficulties are often caused by asthma, strenuous activity, or an allergic reaction. Symptoms may include wheezing or coughing, rapid breathing, dizziness, feeling of “gaspings for air.”

Assess the situation. First, ask the person if he or she needs emergency care. If the answer is “yes,” or if the person cannot answer, **call 911 immediately**. Ask the person if medication is readily available. If so, help administer the medication. Have the person **sit down** and get comfortable.

! Help the person stay calm by talking calmly. Asthma symptoms can escalate further by stressful situations and the person’s own shortness of breath.

Drowning


- ✓ Instruct someone to call 911 immediately.
- ✓ Pull the person out of the water. Use caution, and assume there may be a neck or spinal injury.
- ✓ Place the person on a flat, firm surface, face-up.
- ✓ Tilt the person’s head back slightly and open the airway.
- ✓ If not breathing, begin CPR (see **CPR for Drowning Victims** on previous page). Continue CPR until help arrives, or until you can no longer give breaths.



! A person may vomit and/or cough as consciousness is regained.

Do NOT:

- ✓ Put yourself in danger (e.g., thin ice, turbulent or heavy current, other hazards) by attempted rescue.
- ✓ Perform the Heimlich Maneuver, unless CPR has failed to get air into the lungs AND you suspect the person's airway is blocked.

 If the person is breathing, look for any other potential injuries. Remove wet clothes and replace with warm, dry clothes or towels. See also **Hypothermia (Glossary)**.

Heart Attack

Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain. Discomfort may also appear in other areas of the upper body, including pain **in one or both arms**, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.



- Shortness of breath may occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs may include breaking out in a **cold sweat**, **nausea**, or **light-headedness**.

Treatment

If someone else is having a heart attack:

- Call 911.**
- Perform CPR if the person stops breathing** until help arrives (see below).

If YOU are having a heart attack:

- Call 911** to take you to the hospital.
- While you wait for the ambulance to come, **swallow one regular tablet of aspirin** or chew four baby aspirin. Do not take the aspirin if you are allergic to it.
- If you can, **go to a hospital with advanced care.**

The highest survival rate among heart attack victims is for those who receive immediate treatment and are transported to a medical center.

Poisons

Inhaled Poisons

- Call for emergency help.** Never attempt to rescue a victim without notifying others first.
- If you can see a victim and your path to him or her is unobstructed AND if you can hold your breath both in and out of the building, **drag the victim from the building.**
- After rescuing the victim **check his or her airway, breathing, and circulation.** If necessary, perform rescue breathing and CPR.
- As necessary, **perform first aid for skin burns, eye injuries, or convulsions.**
- If the **victim vomits, protect his or her airway.**
- Even if the victim seems fine, **get medical help.**



ALWAYS CALL YOUR LOCAL POISON CONTROL CENTER FOR ADVICE.

Skin Contact with Poisons

If you come in contact with any hazardous or unknown liquid, gel, dust, or plant, take these steps:

- Wash your skin thoroughly.** Leave the exposed area in cool running water for at least five minutes.



Do not scrub your skin, even if it is burning or tingling. Abrading the skin can cause the substance to enter the bloodstream more quickly.

- After you have flushed the area thoroughly with water, **wash the area very gently with a mild soap.**
- Continue to flush** with water for several more minutes.
- Blot, do not rub,** your skin dry with paper towels, and dispose of the towels.
- Seek medical attention if there is any blistering or reddening of the skin** or if it continues to burn.

Poisoning



Approximately 2.5 million poisonings are reported to poison control centers every year, with nearly 1,000 reported fatalities. In a poisoning emergency, immediate first aid is critical. Suspect poisoning if someone suddenly becomes sick for no apparent reason.

Swallowed Poisons

- Call Poison Control Center, if available.**
- If necessary, begin rescue breathing and **call 911.**
- Check and monitor the victim's airway, breathing, and circulation.**
- Try to **find out if the victim has indeed been poisoned.** Some signs include chemical-smelling breath, burns around the mouth, difficulty breathing, and vomiting. If possible, try to identify the poison.
- Only induce vomiting if the poison control center tells you to do so.**
- If the **victim vomits, protect the airway.** If you must clear the victim's airway, wrap a cloth around your fingers before cleaning out his or her mouth and throat. If the victim has vomited a plant part, save it.
- If the victim starts having convulsions, **protect him or her from injury.**
- Reassure the victim and keep him or her comfortable. **Position the victim on his or her left side while getting or awaiting medical help.** If the poison has spilled on the victim's clothes, remove the clothing and flush the skin with water.

See also **Contamination (Glossary)** and **Anthrax Poisoning (Glossary)**.

Seizure

Seizures can be caused by medical disorders, high fevers or from certain types of poisoning.

Symptoms

- Loss of consciousness
- Convulsions
- Confusion
- Inability to respond to questions or direction
- Rapid blinking
- Staring into space



Treatment

- Stay calm and prevent injury.**
- Make sure there is nothing within reach that could harm the person if he or she struck it.
- Pay attention to the length of the seizure.** If the seizure lasts more than one minute, call 911.
- Make the person as comfortable as possible.
- Keep onlookers away.
- If the person having a seizure thrashes around, there is no need for restraint. **Do not hold the person down.**
- Contrary to popular belief, a person having a seizure is incapable of swallowing his or her tongue.

! Never interfere with someone who is having a seizure except to put cushioning materials under the person's head. **DO NOT PUT ANYTHING IN THE SEIZURING PERSON'S MOUTH.**

- Do not give the person water, pills, or food until fully alert.
- After the seizure, **the person should be placed on his or her left side.** Keep in mind there is a small risk of post-seizure vomiting, before the person is fully alert.
- Stay with the person until recovery (five to twenty minutes).

! The seizure victim should be allowed to sleep after the seizure has stopped.

Severe Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis)

Allergic reactions can occur due to various culprits, including bites, stings, foods, or even airborne allergens. Most allergic reactions are not life-threatening.

Symptoms

- Skin:** hives, swelling, itchiness, warmth, redness, rash.
- Breathing:** wheezing, shortness of breath, throat tightness, coughing, hoarse voice, chest pain/tightness, trouble swallowing.
- Stomach:** nausea, pain/cramps, vomiting, diarrhea, itchy mouth/throat.
- Circulation:** pale/blue color, poor pulse, passing-out, dizzy/light-headed, low blood pressure, shock.
- Other:** anxiety, feeling of “impending doom,” red/itchy/watery eyes, headache, cramping of the uterus.
- Call 911.**
- Check to see if person has **EpiPen®** or other medication.
- If the person is going into anaphylactic shock, help **administer medication.**
- Remove the gray safety cap. Place the black tip on the thigh at a right angle (90° angle) to the leg. Press hard into the thigh until the auto-injector functions. Hold in place for several seconds. Then remove the auto-injector and discard. **Massage** the injection area for ten seconds.

If 911 Is Not Available...

- If the person does not have an EpiPen®, does not have asthma or high blood pressure, administering a double dose of Diphenhydramine (Benadryl® tablets or liquid) or Pseudoephedrine (Actifed®, Sudafed®) may help.

Shock

“Shock” is an emergency situation in which there is not enough oxygen being supplied to the cells. It usually occurs due to lack of blood flow from severe bleeding, electric shock, allergic reactions, diabetes, or other traumatic injury. If not treated, shock can lead to unconsciousness and/or death.

A person in shock needs these three measures, for ventilation, infusion, and pumping (a.k.a., “VIP”):

- ✓ Immediate **Ventilation** to make sure the oxygen is getting to the blood stream.
- ✓ An **Infusion** of fluids to restore blood volume.
- ✓ Maintenance of the heart **Pumping** action.



Always assume shock is present with any serious trauma or injury.

Stroke

Stroke can strike anyone at any age. Get treatment right away to decrease long-term damage.

Symptoms

- Difficulty in moving** one side or some part of the body
- Extreme headache**
- Dizziness
- Sudden paralysis** or collapse
- Seizure
- Pupils unequal in size
- Confused** speech

Another warning sign of a stroke is called a transient ischemic attack (TIA). A TIA is a “mini-stroke” that can cause the symptoms listed above, may only last a few minutes, **but should not be ignored**. Call your doctor immediately if you think you are having a TIA.

Treatment

- Call 911** immediately.
- Check and maintain ABCs.
- Keep head elevated.
- Keep warm.



Early treatment for stroke is vital to reduce long-term disability.

Trauma

While you are rendering first aid, **do not move the person**, unless the area is dangerous.

- Carefully “log-roll” the person, supporting the head and neck to roll as one unit, if:
 - Unresponsive
 - Vomiting or bleeding from mouth
- Maintain airway** by tilting chin back to open airway.
- Hold the person’s head gently** with both hands.
- Remind the person not to move his or her neck or head.

GLOSSARY

Amputation

Amputation is the removal of a body part. If you witness an amputation, first **call 911**. Then **stop the bleeding**. A complete amputation may not bleed very much. Have the injured person **lie down and elevate the site** that is bleeding. **Check and treat for shock**.

If there is bleeding, **wash your hands** with soap and water and put on latex gloves (if gloves are not available, use many layers of clean cloth, plastic bags, or the cleanest material available between your hands and the wound). **Apply steady, direct pressure** for a full fifteen minutes. If blood soaks through the cloth, apply another one without lifting the first. If there is an object in the wound, apply pressure around the object, not directly over it.

Anthrax Poisoning

Inhalation anthrax is an infectious disease caused by breathing in the spores of the bacteria *Bacillus Anthracis*. Anthrax commonly affects hooved animals, such as sheep and goats, but humans can get sick from anthrax, as well.

There are usually **two stages of inhalation anthrax**:

1. Stage One can last from hours to a few days.
2. Stage Two often develops suddenly, and is fatal in up to 90% of individuals, due to toxins in the body.

Avoiding Contraction

The risk of contracting anthrax poisoning is very low. If you are concerned, speak to your doctor about getting the Anthrax vaccination.

Anthrax is a potential agent for use as a biological weapon or bioterrorism. Most experts have concluded that it is technologically difficult to use anthrax effectively as a weapon on a large scale.

See also **Contamination** and **Poisoning (Emergency)**.

Symptoms

- ❑ **Initial stage:** fever, chills, sweating, fatigue, general ill feeling, headache, cough, shortness of breath, and chest pain
- ❑ **Second stage:** fever, severe shortness of breath, and shock

Treatment

- ❑ Antibiotics

Avian Flu (Bird Flu)

Avian influenza is an infection caused by avian influenza (or “bird flu”) viruses. These flu viruses occur naturally, worldwide, among birds that commonly carry the viruses in their intestines or respiratory tracts.

Avoiding Contraction

- ✓ Travelers to affected areas are advised to **avoid contact with birds and poultry**, and avoid going to bird parks, poultry markets, and farms.
- ✓ Avoid touching birds and poultry, especially ill or dead birds, which may carry the avian flu virus.
- ✓ If you have been in contact with birds or poultry, immediately **wash your hands thoroughly** with soap and water or waterless alcohol-based hand rubs or sanitizer.
- ✓ **Observe food hygiene** and eat only poultry and eggs that have been thoroughly cooked from approved sources.
- ✓ The U.S. Centers for Disease Control recommends annual vaccinations as “the single best way to prevent flu.” Consult with your doctor to determine if vaccination is right for you.
- ✓ In addition to vaccination, building and maintaining **good body resistance** is also recommended. This can be achieved through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, good personal hygiene, not smoking, and adequate indoor ventilation.
- ✓ As with any disease spread from a respiratory route, wash your hands, cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and avoid crowded places with poor ventilation.

Bites or Scratches From Animals

Bites or Scratches From Animals (Such as Dogs or Cats)

In the event of a bite, scratch, or attack from a domestic animal, such as dog or cat:

- ✓ Wash the bite area with warm, soapy water.
- ✓ If the animal is not yours, be sure that the owner confines it. Keep an open dialogue with the owner—exchange phone numbers and obtain veterinarian information, vaccination history, etc.
- ✓ If the dog or cat appears to be a stray or feral, and/or the wound appears serious, consult a medical professional immediately.

How to Prevent or Avoid Dog Bites/Scratches

- ✓ Pay attention to a dog's body language. Dogs will show warning signs before attacking or biting.
- ✓ Do NOT use violence or aggression towards a dog in any situation.

Bites From Wild or Non-Domesticated Animals

- ✓ **Wash wound thoroughly** with soap and water.
- ✓ If bleeding excessively, apply pressure over the wound to help stop bleeding.
- ✓ **Cover the wound** with a sterile bandage.
- ✓ **Seek medical attention.**



Animal bites can carry rabies. Be particularly careful around dogs, raccoons, skunks, foxes, wolves, and bats.

- ✓ **Watch for signs of allergic reaction.** See **Anaphylaxis/ Severe Allergic Reaction (Emergency)**. If present, seek immediate medical care.
- ✓ **Wash the area** of a tick bite with warm water and soap.

Bites and Stings From Insects

Symptoms (see chart on next page)

- Tenderness, mild swelling, or irritation
- Itching or stinging sensation

Treatment

- If the person has been stung, move him or her to a safe place to avoid more stings.
- Elevate the wound. Scrape or brush off the stinger with a straight-edged object, such as a credit card or the back of a knife.
- Wash the affected area with soap and water. Do not try to pull out the stinger—doing so may release more venom.
- Apply an ice pack or a cloth filled with ice to reduce pain and swelling.
- If a bite becomes irritated, **apply an antibiotic ointment** or a baking soda paste (three teaspoons baking soda to one teaspoon water) to the bite or sting several times a day until symptoms subside.

When to Call the Doctor

- If the person experiences any of the following symptoms:
 - Nausea and intestinal cramps
 - Diarrhea
 - Swelling larger than two inches in diameter at the site



If a person has an anaphylactic reaction, call 911.







Some people may have allergic reactions to bee and wasp stings. Be on the lookout for difficulty breathing or excessive swelling, particularly in the mouth or throat.




A bite from a brown recluse or a black widow spider should be considered a medical emergency, seek immediate medical treatment at a hospital emergency department.

Bites From Insects

Insect Name	Looks like	Symptoms	What to Do
Brown Recluse 	Spider with violin-shaped mark on upper back	Itching, or redness at the site within several hours or days of the bite; a deep blue or purple area around the bite, surrounded by a whitish ring and large red outer ring similar to a "bull's eye"; headache or body aches; rash, fever, and/or nausea/vomiting	Go to the emergency department
Black Widow 	Shiny black spider with a red hour-glass mark on the abdomen	Swelling, and redness at the site (double fang marks may be seen), cramping pain, and muscle rigidity in the stomach, chest, shoulders, back; headache; dizziness; sweating; eyelid swelling; nausea or vomiting; tearing of the eyes; and/or weakness, paralysis (in the legs)	Go to the emergency department
Tick 	Small dark bug	Sometimes symptomless; rash or sore at the bite site, flu-like symptoms, muscle pain, headache, and/or swelling	Remove with tweezers
Wasp, Yellow Jacket 	Narrow-waisted and winged insect	Burning, irritation, itching, or redness at the site, sometimes with stinger penetrating the site	Scrape or flick the stinger away; do not pull or squeeze; wash with soap and water; watch for signs of allergic reaction

Bleeding

Bleeding can be life threatening if the bleeding is profuse and/or the person goes into shock. Call 911, if bleeding appears to be serious.

 Remember that some diseases are transmitted via blood. If possible, ensure that you use disposable gloves when working with a bleeding person.

✓ If bleeding is seen:

- Place **direct pressure** over the wound/site of bleeding.
- Use **clean material**, preferably gauze, for dressing.
- **Apply and maintain pressure** over the dressing, taking care not to dislodge clots.
- If the bleeding continues, apply more dressing and bandages over the original dressing.

Nosebleed

- ✓ Have the **person sit down** and lean slightly forward. Leaning back can cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- ✓ Use your thumb and index finger to **squeeze together the soft portion of the nose**. This area is located between the end of the nose and the hard, bony ridge that forms the bridge.
- ✓ **Keep holding the nose until the bleeding stops**. Do not let go for at least five minutes. If it is still bleeding, hold it again for ten minutes straight.

Botulism

Botulism is a serious illness caused by a nerve toxin made by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. Accidental poisoning (other than by ingesting improperly canned food) with weaponized botulism is highly unlikely.

Avoiding Contraction

Weaponized botulism poison can be inhaled, ingested (swallowed), or injected into people's bodies. Exposure to botulism can also occur by eating improperly processed home canned foods or foods that have spoiled. Person-to-person spread does not occur.

Symptoms

- Double or vision
- Drooping eyelids
- Slurred speech
- Difficulty swallowing
- Dry mouth
- Muscle weakness
- Paralysis (if untreated)

Treatment

The symptoms of botulism are severe, so hospitalization is necessary. If diagnosed early, botulism can be treated with an antitoxin, which blocks the action of the nerve toxin circulating in the blood.

Burns

Burns occur from fire or heat sources, electricity, or chemicals. Always stop the burning before administering aid to the person.

Fire or Heat Sources

For Minor Burns

- ✓ If the skin is unbroken, **run cool water over the area** of the burn or soak it in a cool water bath (not ice water). Calm and reassure the person.
- ✓ After flushing or soaking, **cover the burn** with a dry, sterile bandage or clean dressing.
- ✓ **Protect the burn** from pressure and friction.
- ✓ Over-the-counter **ibuprofen or acetaminophen** can help relieve pain and swelling. **DO NOT** give aspirin to children.
- ✓ Minor burns will usually heal without further treatment. Make sure the person is up-to-date on tetanus immunizations.

For Major Burns

- ✓ If someone is on fire, tell the person to **STOP, DROP, and ROLL**. Wrap the person in thick material to smother the flames (a wool or cotton coat, rug, or blanket). **Douse the person with water**.
- ✓ **Call 911**.
- ✓ Make sure that the person is no longer in contact with smoldering materials. However, **DO NOT remove burned clothing** that is stuck to the skin.
- ✓ **Make sure the person is breathing**. If breathing has stopped, or if the person's airway is blocked, open the airway. If necessary, begin rescue breathing and **CPR**.
- ✓ **Cover the burn area** with a dry sterile bandage (if available) or clean cloth. A sheet will do if the burned area is large. **DO NOT apply any ointments**. Avoid breaking burn blisters.
- ✓ If fingers or toes have been burned, **separate them** with dry, sterile, non-adhesive dressings.

- ✓ **Elevate the body part** that is burned above the level of the heart. Protect the burned area from pressure and friction.
- ✓ **Monitor and treat for shock.**
- ✓ Continue to monitor the person's vital signs until medical help arrives.

Electrical Burns

- ✓ **Look first. Do not touch.** The person may still be in contact with the electrical source. Touching the person may electrocute you.
- ✓ **Turn off the source of electricity**, if possible. If not, move the source away from both you and the injured person using a non-conducting object made of cardboard, plastic, or wood.
- ✓ **Check for signs of circulation** (breathing, coughing or movement). If absent, begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (**CPR**) immediately.
- ✓ **Call 911** or call for emergency medical assistance, if the person who has been burned is in pain, is confused, or is experiencing changes in his or her breathing, heartbeat, or consciousness.
- ✓ **Prevent shock.** Lie the person down with his or her head slightly lower than the trunk and with the legs elevated.
- ✓ **Cover the affected areas.** If the person is breathing, cover any burned areas with a sterile gauze bandage, if available, or a clean cloth.

Chemical Burns

- ✓ Make sure the **chemical has been removed.** Try not to come in contact with it yourself.
- ✓ If the chemical is dry, brush off any excess. Avoid contact with eyes.
- ✓ **Remove any contaminated clothing** or jewelry.
- ✓ **Flush the chemicals** off the skin surface using cool running water for fifteen minutes or more.
- ✓ **Treat the person for shock** if he or she appears faint, pale, or if there is shallow, rapid breathing.
- ✓ **Apply cool, wet compresses** to relieve pain.

- ✓ **Cover the burned area** with a dry sterile dressing (if possible) or clean cloth. Protect the burned area from pressure and friction.
- ✓ If there is a second- or third-degree burn, or if there is an overall body reaction, **get medical help immediately.**

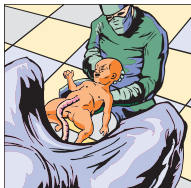
Childbirth

Symptoms

- Mother is having contractions, or water has broken.

Treatment

- Do not panic, **call 911.**
- Remind the mother to **try to pant**, or only **push very gently with the contractions.**
- As the infant's head becomes visible, **place your hand on the head and provide it with support to keep it from popping out.** Remind the mother to try and pant during this part to help prevent tearing.
- Do not pull on the infant or its head.** Gently guide the baby out.
- Gently stroke downward on the infant's nose** to help expel the excess mucous and amniotic fluid.
- Dry the infant off and place it skin-to-skin on mom**, with the baby's head slightly lower than its body.
- Cover both of them** with dry blankets or towels.
- Do not cut or pull on the umbilical cord.**
- If the cord is long enough **have the mother nurse the infant.** This will help expel the placenta and should reduce postpartum bleeding.
- If the placenta delivers, place it next to the infant and then gently, but firmly, clamp (or tie with string) the umbilical cord a few inches from the infant.
- Keep the mother and infant safe until help arrives, or until you can get to the hospital.**



Cholera

Cholera is an infection of the intestine caused by drinking water or eating food contaminated with the cholera bacterium.

Avoiding Contraction

When traveling out of the country in areas known to have cholera, follow these precautions:

- ✓ Drink only water that you have boiled or treated with chlorine or iodine. Other safe beverages include tea and coffee made with boiled water, as well as carbonated, bottled beverages with no ice.
- ✓ Only eat foods that have been thoroughly cooked and are still hot.
- ✓ Only eat fruit that you have peeled yourself.
- ✓ Avoid under-cooked or raw fish or shellfish.
- ✓ Make sure all vegetables are cooked; avoid salads.
- ✓ Avoid foods and beverages from street vendors.

Symptoms include vomiting, abdominal bloating and pain, diarrhea, dehydration, shock.

Treatment

- Antibiotics; fluid and electrolyte replacement
- Treat for shock, lay victim down, raise legs, keep victim warm

Contamination



Some diseases, such as HIV and hepatitis can be very rarely spread by blood if it comes in contact with broken skin. Additionally, semen, vaginal secretions, urine, and feces can sometimes spread disease. Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.

General Info

Contamination can take many forms, resulting from exposure to viruses or biological attacks. Information may come slowly. Always trust official sources such as health care providers and public health officials. As in all emergency or survival situations, try to remain calm.

Be prepared by locating your Personal Evacuation Kit and First Aid Kit, and gathering food, and water. If the contamination is the result of a large-scale attack, such as chemical or radiological, be mindful of your supplies, which should include food, water, and electrical chargers or batteries (for emergency devices, such as phones, flashlights, and cameras).

If you suspect exposure, stay informed by checking for streaming news updates online, watching television, and listening to the radio for official news. Know that public health officials may not be able to provide information right away about a pandemic, chemical, nuclear, or biological attack.

Use of Respiratory Masks

Respirators with full face pieces and respiratory masks will filter most biological agents, if the devices contain the proper filters, if the filters have not deteriorated, and if they have been properly fitted to the individual who will be using them.

Improper use can be hazardous and may result in injury or suffocation. Health organizations do not recommend the use of respiratory masks for the general public. If you have not been trained on the proper use and annual testing required to use these masks, DO NOT use one. The danger of improper use outweighs any potential benefit.

Air Contamination

Ongoing trace air contamination will be an issue if there has been a large-scale fire, volcano eruption, HazMat release, or bioterrorist attack.

- ✓ Continue to **keep the house closed off** as much as possible, if you are sheltering in place.
- ✓ Cover your mouth and nose with a handkerchief or surgical mask when you go outside.
- ✓ Avoid strenuous exercise or activities.
- ✓ **Breathe shallowly**, if possible.


Water Contamination

After a natural disaster or terrorist attack, **assume that the water supply is contaminated**.

Accidental Contamination

If the water supply has been accidentally contaminated, you may drink the water AFTER you have treated it:

- ✓ **Boil all water** at a rolling boil for 10 minutes. Add to the cooling water ONE of these items:
 - **Add 8 drops of liquid chlorine bleach** (such as Clorox) per gallon of water. Make sure the bleach is 4%–6% sodium hypochlorite, OR
 - **Add 20 drops of 2% iodine** per gallon of clear water or 40 drops per gallon of cloudy water, OR
 - Add water purification tablets according to directions on the package.
- ✓ **Let the water stand** for at least 30 minutes.

 Do not use or drink any water that is dark in color or has any material floating in it. Use purified water for all personal hygiene, cooking, and cleaning.



Water contamination can also occur from ground contamination runoff. This means that **well water may not be safe**, and that other bodies of water may also be contaminated, such as rivers, lakes, streams, and bays. Check with your local authorities before assuming the fish and shellfish are safe again.

Ground Contamination

After a disaster or terrorist attack, the ground may be contaminated with chemicals and heavy metals. Ground contamination can occur from:

- ✓ **Residual chemicals** used in chemical warfare
- ✓ **Debris** left after a massive explosion
- ✓ **Contaminated flood waters** seeping into the ground
- ✓ **Fallout** from nuclear weaponry

If you suspect that the ground is contaminated, take these steps:

- ✓ **Do not eat any livestock** raised, or fruits or vegetables grown, in the contaminated zone.
- ✓ **Do not drink well water.**
- ✓ **Do not let children or pets play outside.**
- ✓ Do not dig or turn over soil.

Food Contamination

After a disaster or terrorist attack, assess if you can salvage any food you have stored. The safest foods to eat after any disaster are those in sealed metal cans.



Disinfect all cans, **BEFORE** opening, with purified water and detergent and then rinse in a solution of two tablespoons of bleach to one gallon of water.

Follow these guidelines to avoid getting food poisoning or exposing yourself to toxins:

1. If you have been exposed to a **nuclear, biological, or chemical attack**, or spill severe enough to cause you to evacuate:
 - Discard all **fresh and frozen foods**.
 - Discard all foods in paper or plastic containers. These containers allow toxins to enter, which may contaminate the food.
 - Discard any **cans that look “bloated”** or rusted.
 - Do not eat livestock or fish that have been exposed to contamination.
2. If you have been through a **natural disaster or a power outage**:
 - Discard any **previously frozen food** that is or has been at room temperature since the disaster.



Food that has only partially defrosted may generally be eaten or refrozen for later use.

- Discard any **dry foodstuffs** (chips, pasta, crackers, cereal) that have become wet.
- Discard all **bottled goods that have been submerged** in water.
- Discard any **cans that look “bloated”** or rusted.

Decontamination



Chemical accidents, viral exposure, or terrorist attacks may contaminate you and your clothes. This makes it necessary to remove and dispose of your clothing and then wash yourself. This process is called decontamination.

Importance of Immediate Decontamination

- ✓ To prevent the chemical from being further absorbed by the body or from spreading on the body.
- ✓ To prevent the chemical from spreading to other people.



What to Do

1. **Remove your clothing.**
 - ✓ Quickly cut off clothing that has chemicals on it.
 - ✓ Try to avoid touching any contaminated areas.
2. **Wash yourself.**
 - ✓ As quickly as possible, wash any chemicals from your skin with large amounts of soap and water.
 - ✓ If your eyes are burning or blurry, rinse your eyes with plain water for fifteen minutes. Remove contact lenses and throw them out. If you wear glasses, wash them with soap and water.
3. **Dispose of your clothes.**
 - ✓ Place your clothing inside a plastic bag.
 - ✓ Wear rubber gloves to handle clothing or put the clothing in the bag using tongs, tool handles, sticks, or similar objects.



Anything that touches the contaminated clothing should also be placed in the bag. If you wear contacts lenses, put them in the plastic bag, too.

- ✓ Put rubber gloves in the bag and seal it, and then seal that bag inside another bag.
- ✓ When the local or state health department or emergency personnel arrive, tell them what you did with your clothes.

Diabetic Emergencies

Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Sugar)

Symptoms may include sweating, shakiness or dizziness, anxiety or irritability, confusion, difficulty speaking, paleness, inability to swallow, seizure, loss of consciousness.

For treatment, provide the person with fruit juice or non-diet soda. Then, obtain immediate assistance from a qualified health care professional.



Hypoglycemia has a blood glucose of <80 .
Hyperglycemia has a blood glucose of >180 .

Hyperglycemia (High Blood Sugar)

Symptoms may include flushed skin, labored breathing, confusion, cramps, very weak, sweet breath, nausea, loss of consciousness


For treatment, give water by mouth. Provide access to bathroom and medication. **Call 911.**

Eye Injuries

Symptoms include irritation to the eye, eyes red or tearing, sensation of something in the eye.

Treatment

- Wash your hands** thoroughly before touching the eyelids to examine or flush the eye.
- Do not touch, press, or rub the eye itself.
- Do not try to remove any foreign body except by flushing**, because of the risk of scratching the surface of the eye.
- Tilt the person's head over a basin** with the affected eye down and gently pull down the lower lid, encouraging the person to open his or her eyes as wide as possible.
- Gently pour a steady stream of lukewarm water** (do not heat the water) from a pitcher across the eye. Sterile saline solution can also be used.
- Flush for up to fifteen minutes**, checking the eye every five minutes to see if the foreign body has been flushed out.
- Because a particle can scratch the cornea and cause an infection, the eye should be examined by a doctor if there continues to be any irritation afterward.
- If a foreign body is not dislodged by flushing, the person should see a physician.

 Do not try to remove an embedded or impaled object from an eye. Cover the eye loosely with a sterile gauze and go directly to the nearest emergency room.

- If an injury was due to blunt trauma (e.g., getting hit with a ball), **apply cold compresses to the eye intermittently**: five to ten minutes on, ten to fifteen minutes off.

- If you are unable to measure your temperature, look for symptoms of illness every hour while you have a fever and follow home treatment measures.
- Take a nonprescription medication to help relieve your fever such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

Seek medical attention if:

- Level of consciousness changes.**
- You are unable to drink enough fluids.
- Fever lasts longer than four days.**
- Other symptoms develop**, such as pain in one area of the body, a cough, or urinary symptoms.
- Fever recurs more than once over three weeks.
- Symptoms become more severe or frequent.

Fainting

Fainting is a temporary loss of consciousness due to a drop in blood flow to the brain. The episode is brief and is followed by rapid and complete recovery.

Immediate treatment for someone who has fainted:

- Check the **person's airway and breathing**. If necessary, call 911 and begin CPR.
- Loosen tight clothing around the neck.
- Keep the affected person lying down** for at least ten to fifteen minutes, preferably in a cool and quiet space.
- If vomiting has occurred, turn the person onto one side to prevent choking.
- Elevate the feet** about twelve inches above the heart.

Call 911 if the person who fainted:

- Fell** from a height, especially if injured or bleeding.
- Does not regain consciousness** quickly (within one minute).
- Is pregnant or over fifty years old.**
- Has diabetes** (check medical ID bracelet).
- Feels chest pain**, pressure, or discomfort; pounding or irregular heartbeat; or has loss of speech, visual disturbances, or inability to move one or more limbs.
- Has convulsions, tongue trauma, or loss of bowel control.**

Fever

Fever is your body's way of healing from an infection. If the fever is high or prolonged, you will need to treat it.



Never give aspirin to anyone under the age of 18. Use only acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin).


Children 3 years and younger

- ✓ Use a rectal thermometer for children three years of age and younger.
- ✓ Fever is present if temperature is 100.4°F (38°C) or higher. (For infants under 3 months, if the infant has a temperature of **101°F or higher, contact your physician immediately**)
- ✓ Encourage your child to drink or eat Popsicles. Your child should be urinating at least every six to eight hours.
- ✓ **Dress your child lightly**, and do not wrap him or her in blankets. Dressing lightly will help your child's body cool down.
- ✓ **If the fever is higher than 102°F (38.9°C) and your child is uncomfortable:**
 - Give a nonprescription medication to help relieve your child's pain or fever.
 - Give your child a lukewarm sponge bath. Do not use cold water, ice, or rubbing alcohol.
 - Keep encouraging your child to drink fluids.
 - Encourage quiet activities.
 - Watch for signs of dehydration.

Seek medical attention if:

- Your child has a **temperature of 105°F (40.6°C) or higher.**
- You suspect your child has an extremely high fever.
- Home treatment is not making your child feel better.
- There is a significant decrease in your child's activity level** or level of consciousness, or your child acts confused for no reason.
- Signs of dehydration develop.**
- Pain develops or the pain becomes more severe.

- Fever lasts longer than seventy-two hours.
- Symptoms become more severe or frequent.

 Febrile (fever) seizures are not uncommon in small children. **Almost all seizures of this sort are not harmful, BUT you should call 911 to be safe.** They usually last one to two minutes, and then the child will fall into a deep sleep or will appear groggy. Check with your family physician or pediatrician for more information.

Older Children and Adults

- ✓ Use an oral thermometer.
- ✓ Fever is present if temperature is 99.7°F (37.6°C) or higher.
- ✓ **Adults should drink at least ten glasses of liquid a day** to replenish lost fluids
- ✓ **Take a lukewarm (80°F [26.7°C] to 90°F [32.2°C]) shower or bath.** Do not try to take a shower if you are dizzy or unsteady on your feet. Increase the water temperature if you start to shiver.
- ✓ **Dress lightly.** Do not use heavy clothing or bed covers. Keep room temperature at 70°F or lower.

Frost Bite

Damage from frostbite can be avoided if attended to quickly.

Symptoms include pain (initially), swelling, white skin, numbness, loss of function and eventual absence of pain, blisters may also develop.

Treatment

- Warm the affected area** by soaking in a tub of warm water (101°F to 104°F) and an antiseptic solution.
- Stop when the affected area becomes red**, not when sensation returns. (This should take about 45 minutes. If done too rapidly, thawing can be painful and blisters may develop.)

See also **Hypothermia**.

- Keep exposed area elevated.
- Never massage a frostbitten area.**
- Protect exposed area** from the cold. It is more sensitive to re-injury.

Gunshot Wounds

- ✓ **Call 911** immediately.
- ✓ **Check entry and exit wounds:**
 - If the wound is in the chest or abdomen, and the person makes a “sucking” sound when breathing, cover the entry and exit wound with an airtight seal.
 - If is not a “sucking” wound, apply direct pressure with a clean, dry cloth until bleeding subsides.
- ✓ Watch for **respiratory distress**.
- ✓ If distress occurs with a chest wound, **open seal to wound** to relieve pressure, then reseal.
- ✓ **Bandage the wound.**



Head Injuries

Head injuries can occur from many different types of accidents. People with head injuries frequently are not aware that they have been seriously injured.

Symptoms include headache, dizziness, weakness, blurred vision, head wound, fluid from ears or nose, vomiting or nausea, convulsions, loss of consciousness.

Treatment

- Call 911.** Always get medical help if the person:
 - **Becomes unusually drowsy**
 - Develops a **severe headache** or stiff neck
 - **Vomits** more than once
 - **Loses consciousness** (even if brief)
 - **Behaves abnormally**

For moderate to severe head injury, do the following:

- ❑ **Call 911.**
- ❑ Check the **person's airway, breathing, and circulation**. If necessary, begin rescue breathing and CPR.
- ❑ If the person's breathing and vital signs are normal but the person is unconscious, **treat as if there is a spinal injury**. Stabilize the head and neck by placing your hands on both sides of the person's head, keeping the head in line with the spine and preventing movement. Wait for medical help.
- ❑ **Stop any bleeding** by firmly pressing a clean cloth on the wound. If the injury is serious, be careful not to move the person's head. If blood soaks through the cloth, **DO NOT** remove it. Place another cloth over the first one.
- ❑ **If you suspect a skull fracture, DO NOT apply direct pressure to the bleeding site**, and **DO NOT** remove any debris from the wound. Cover the wound with sterile gauze dressing.
- ❑ If the person is **vomiting**, roll the person's head, neck, and body as one unit onto his or her side.
- ❑ **Apply ice packs to swollen areas.**

For a mild head injury, no specific treatment may be needed. **However, closely watch the person for any concerning symptoms over the next twenty-four hours.** While the person is sleeping, wake him or her every two to three hours and ask simple questions to check alertness, such as "What is your name?"

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke (also known as hyperthermia) and its pre-emerging heat disorders are serious emergencies. Do not ignore the symptoms or fail to treat them.

Symptoms include red skin; initial deep, rapid breathing that becomes shallow and weak; rapid, strong pulse; increasing dizziness and weakness; dry mouth; headache; nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; mental confusion; anxiety, hysteria, combativeness.



Treatment

- Call 911.**
- Cool the person.** Simple ice packs will not effectively lower temperature if used alone. Use a variety of the following methods:
 - **Remove excess layers of person's clothing** and pour cool water over the person, avoiding nose and mouth.
 - **Fan briskly** and keep the person shaded from the sun.
 - Place **wrapped cold packs under armpits**, on the neck, groin, wrists, ankles and behind each knee to cool the large surface blood vessels.
 - If the person starts to shiver, slow down your cooling process, as shivering produces heat.
- If the person is conscious, slightly **elevate the head and shoulders** during cooling.
- Be prepared for related complications** of the elevated temperature.
- Watch the person closely.** If hyperthermia recurs before the ambulance arrives, begin cooling procedures again.

! Sometimes, a person reacting to overheating or hyperthermia may appear with varying symptoms, causing heat cramps or heat exhaustion. If someone is experiencing any symptoms caused by overheating, cool the person and be prepared to treat and/or call for medical assistance.

Hypothermia (Exposure)

Hypothermia occurs when a person's internal temperature becomes too low and is generally caused by prolonged exposure to cold weather.

Symptoms include shivering (initially); initial increase in heart rate, breathing rate, and blood pressure; as the temperature drops further, pulse, breathing rate, and blood pressure all decrease; clumsiness; apathy; confusion; slurred speech.



Treatment

- Perform a careful check** for breathing and a pulse and initiate CPR as necessary.
- If the person is unconscious, has severe breathing difficulty, or has no pulse, **call 911**.
- Remove all wet clothing** and move the person inside.
- Give the injured person **warm fluids** if he or she is able to drink, but do not give caffeine or alcohol.
- Cover the person's body** with blankets and aluminum-coated foils, and place the person in a sleeping bag. Avoid actively heating the victim with outside sources of heat, such as radiators or hot water baths, but keep the person in a warm location, if possible.
- Have the person **avoid strenuous activity**.

See also **Frostbite**.

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is an infection caused by a tick bite. If untreated, Lyme disease can cause complications involving joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

Avoiding Contraction

The best defense is to avoid being bit by an infected insect. Wear long pants and shirts, and use an effective tick repellent when outdoors.

Symptoms include a flat or slightly raised red lesion at the site of the tick bite, fever, headache, weakness, muscle pains, stiff neck, joint inflammation in the knees and other large joints.

Treatment

Contact your physician if you have symptoms of Lyme disease. Early treatment with antibiotics is important to avoid long-term problems.

Radiation

- ✓ If a **dirty bomb** has been detonated, respond as you would for an incendiary device, shelter in place or evacuate as instructed, and then follow decontamination procedures.
- ✓ If a **nuclear weapon** has been deployed, take immediate cover, preferably below ground or in an inside room in a building away from glass.
- ✓ Radioactive fallout will continue for some time, so **evacuating or taking shelter** after the explosion is still wise. Take cover below ground, or in an interior room.
- ✓ If you remain inside, follow the shelter-in-place instructions.
- ✓ **Monitor the news** and follow the instructions given by local or national authorities.

Reduce Your Exposure

After a nuclear event, continue to limit your exposure to radioactive fallout:

- ✓ **Shielding:** Continue to shelter in place in the innermost part of your home or shelter.
- ✓ **Distance:** The farther away you are from the blast, the weaker the radiation.
- ✓ **Time:** Limit the amount of time you are outside or in contact with contaminated materials.

Seizures

Seizures can be caused by medical disorders, high fevers, or from certain types of poisoning. Symptoms include loss of consciousness, convulsions, confusion, inability to respond to questions or directions, rapid blinking, staring into space. If you suspect the person is having a seizure, **stay calm and prevent injury**.



Pay attention to the length of the seizure. If the seizure lasts more than one minute, call 911. Help keep the person as comfortable as possible.

DO NOT:

- ✓ Hold down or restrain a person having a seizure.
- ✓ **Put anything in the person's mouth** (contrary to popular belief, a person having a seizure is incapable of swallowing his or her own tongue).
- ✓ Give the person water, pills, or food until fully alert.
- ✓ After the seizure, **the person should be placed on his or her left side**. Keep in mind that there is a small risk of post-seizure vomiting before the person is fully alert.
- ✓ Stay with the person until after recovery (five to twenty minutes).

! Do not interfere with someone who is having a seizure except to put cushioning materials under the person's head. **NEVER PUT ANYTHING IN THE PERSON'S MOUTH.**

Smallpox

Smallpox is a contagious and sometimes fatal disease caused by the variola virus. In 1980, the disease was declared eradicated following worldwide vaccination programs. No human has been infected since.

However, in the aftermath of the events of September and October, 2001, the government is taking precautions to be ready to deal with a bioterrorist attack using smallpox as a weapon. **The deliberate release of smallpox as a terrorist act is now regarded as a possibility.**

Avoiding Contraction

Because smallpox has been eradicated as a “normally-contracted” illness, the smallpox vaccine is not available for members of the general public. However, in the event of a smallpox outbreak, there is enough smallpox vaccine to vaccinate every person in the United States.

Symptoms

The symptoms of smallpox begin with high fever, head and body aches, and sometimes vomiting. A rash follows that spreads and progresses to raised bumps and pus-filled blisters that crust, scab, and fall off after about three weeks, leaving pitted scars.

Treatment

Smallpox can be prevented through use of the smallpox vaccine. There is no proven treatment for smallpox. The majority of people with smallpox recover, but death may occur in up to 30% of cases.

Snakebite



There are two kinds of poisonous snakes in the United States: pit vipers (including rattlers, moccasins and copperheads) and elapids (coral snakes).

! Bites by pit vipers leave telltale fang marks. Bites by coral snakes do not. Many bites, even by poisonous snakes, are “dry,” which means that no venom was injected.



Non-poisonous snakes often leave a U-shaped bite but have no venom.

A bite by a poisonous snake will immediately show signs of a reaction, such as swelling and redness, as well as other symptoms, such as vomiting. Do not attempt to make a tourniquet.



Go to the nearest emergency clinic immediately. There is now a vaccine to help reduce risk of death from rattlesnake bites. Time is of the essence.

Spider Bites, Scorpion Stings

While all spiders are somewhat poisonous, usually only bites from the black widow and brown recluse spiders are truly dangerous. In some cases, signs appear immediately—in others, several days may pass.

Common signs include an irritated area or open sore on the skin, muscle pain, fever, difficulty in breathing, and vomiting.

Place an ice pack on the wound and contact your veterinarian immediately.

See also **Bites From Insects** chart.

Sprains

Symptoms of a sprain include intense pain, swelling, tenderness, bruising or discoloration, and sometimes deformity. If a hand injury, immediately remove any jewelry before the swelling begins.

Treat a sprain with “R.I.C.E”:

- ✓ **Rest** the injured area, as well as refrain from any activity that may increase pain or discomfort.
- ✓ **Ice** the injury for twenty minutes every two hours. This will limit the swelling.
- ✓ **Compress** the injured area carefully, which also reduces the swelling. Color change, “pins and needles,” or numbness of any kind indicates the bandage is cutting off the circulation and should be loosened or removed.
- ✓ **Elevate** the injured area above the level of the heart to help reduce the swelling.



The difference between a break and a sprain can sometime be hard to determine: if in doubt, treat the injury as a broken bone until an x-ray can confirm.

Terrorism

See **Poisoning (Emergency)**, **Anthrax Poisoning, Contamination, Radiation**, and **Bombing or Assault Attack (Survival)**.

West Nile Virus

West Nile virus is a virus that can infect humans, birds, horses, and mosquitoes. People can get West Nile virus when an infected mosquito bites them.

Avoiding Contraction

The best way to **avoid West Nile virus is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes**. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors in the evening, make sure that you have no bodies of stagnant water (wading pools, buckets with rainwater), and that you **wear a DEET-based repellent** when outside.

Symptoms include fever, headache, rash, stiff neck, confusion, weakness, coma.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment for West Nile virus infection. People who experience mild symptoms usually get better without any medicine after a few days. People with symptoms of severe illness who have recently been bit by a mosquito should contact their doctor immediately.

DISASTERS

Disasters are either natural or man-made events that are responsible for significant damage or destruction to property, the environment, and/or living things. Disasters include weather-related events (such as earthquakes or hurricanes), accidents (such as fires), and tragic events (such as terrorist attacks).


No place is safe from all types of disasters, and in fact some locations are more prone to disasters than others. Preparedness can help you act quickly and responsibly in a time of crisis. Read through the following disaster scenarios to learn more about hazards.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| ✓ Earthquake | ✓ Hurricane |
| ✓ Fire | ✓ Terrorist Attack |
| ✓ Flood | ✓ Tornado |
| ✓ Hazardous Material | ✓ Tsunami |

EARTHQUAKE

Earthquakes are the cause of seismic activity in the Earth's crust. Although, technically, earthquakes can occur anywhere (and can be either natural or caused by humans), certain areas are more prone to earthquakes than others.

Earthquake Preparedness

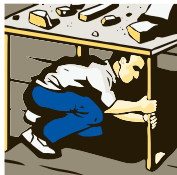
 The San Francisco Bay area has a 63% probability (or 2 out of 3) of experiencing one or more earthquakes of a 6.7 magnitude from now until 2036.

- Research your area and learn more about seismic hazards, faults, and the level of activity in your region.
- Review the Info and Planning tab in this book for more information. Make sure emergency and personal contact information is filled out (see **Info**).

- Make sure every member of your family knows what to do in the event of an earthquake.
 - Establish a meet-up location to reunite after the disaster.
 - Understand which areas are safe and which are not.
 - Keep a First Aid Kit (see **Info**) refreshed and easy to locate.
- Know where gas, electrical, and water main shut-offs are located, as well as how to turn them off (see **Info**).
- Be sure that large items in your home (including appliances, wall hangings, and bookshelves) are secure and well anchored.

During an Earthquake

- NEVER try to “escape” the earthquake.
- DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON. Find a sturdy piece of furniture, such as a desk or table, drop to your knees, crawl under it, and hang on until the shaking stops.
- Do NOT stand in a doorway.
- Hold on to something stationary until the shaking stops.
- If indoors, do not exit the building until the shaking stops. Avoid kitchens, or places where many things can fall down from shelves.
- If outdoors, move to a clear area. Stay away from trees, signs, buildings, and downed electrical wires or poles.
- If in a vehicle, pull over to the side of the road slowly and stop, avoiding overpasses, power lines, trees, or poles. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking stops.



After an Earthquake

- Be prepared for aftershocks, and to take cover again if/when they occur.
- Check yourself and those around you for injuries. Be prepared to administer first aid as needed.
- Use the phone only to report a life-threatening emergency. Keep lines free for first responders and urgent situations.
- DO NOT use matches, appliances, lighters, or electrical equipment, unless you are sure there are no gas leaks.
- Stay clear of damaged or vulnerable structures, power lines, fallen objects, or anything that seems unstable.
- Be mindful of where you step, and switch into sturdy shoes, if available.
- Check food and water supplies. Eat perishable items first, and keep non-perishable items, bottled water, and produce accessible.
- Do not drink or eat out of any open container near shattered glass.
- See also **Tsunami**.



FIRE



Fires started while cooking in the kitchen account for two out of three (or 66%) of home fires and injuries.

Fires can occur for many different reasons, and vary in severity. Fires become dangerous once there is potential for physical damage or loss of control.

Fires can be caused by:

- Arson, arsonists, acts of aggression
- Nature (drought, lightning)
- Industry (logging, forestry operations, agriculture)
- Structural issues (old wiring, faults in chimneys or furnaces)
- Gas, gas leaks
- Negligence, accidents

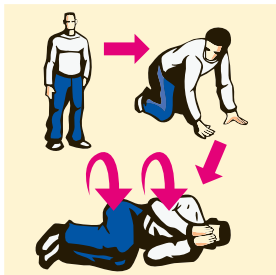
Fire Prevention

HOME or OFFICE

- Install **smoke detectors** in all bedrooms, and at least one in the main living area. Test and change batteries every six months.
- Keep at least one **fire extinguisher** in the house.
- Have and practice **an escape route** from every room in the house.
- Do not overload electrical outlets with too many cords and power strips.
- Learn how to turn off gas** and electricity in an emergency (X-REF).
- Sleep with your bedroom door closed.
- Have fireplaces and wood stoves cleaned and inspected every other year.
- Be careful with candles and open flames inside the home. Never leave a room without extinguishing all candles first.
- Check and replace all frayed electrical cords.
- Clear all brush away from your home and roof. Create what is known as a “defensible area” around your home: a 30’–75’ parameter with no flammable materials, vegetation, brush, or dry leaves.
- Store firewood 30+ feet away from house or deck.
- Consider replacing shake roofs and wood siding with fire resistant materials.

During an Indoor Fire

- 1 Evacuate immediately when you hear a smoke or fire alarm. Account for all family or household members.
- 2 Evacuate pets on a leash or in a pet carrier. Animals may be triggered to flee when outside, frightened by the fire, smoke, or emergency rescue. If you cannot find your pet, check your pet's favorite hiding places.
- 3 Call 911 from a cell phone or neighbor's phone.
- 4 **STOP, DROP, and ROLL**, if your clothing or hair catches on fire.
- 5 DO NOT pour water on an electrical fire.
- 6 If caught in smoke, **drop to your hands and knees and crawl**. Breathe shallow through your nose, and use your shirt or jacket as a filter.
- 7 If you must walk through flames, **hold your breath, close your eyes (when you can), keep your head covered and down, and move as quickly as possible**.
- 8 If you smell a leak (smell of sulfur or rotten eggs), turn off the gas (see **Info**).



In Case of Wildfire

- Keep up to date with local conditions through radio, television, and/or the internet.
- Contact your local fire fighting agency.
- Put on a **long-sleeved shirt and long pants** made of natural fibers, such as cotton, wool, or leather, which are all fire-resistant. Wear a hat and use a bandanna to cover your face. Avoid synthetic fibers of any kind.
- Close all exterior doors**, windows, vents and blinds.

- ❑ **Close all interior doors.**
- ❑ Turn off gas.
- ❑ Move flammable furniture away from windows.
- ❑ **Back your car into the garage.** Leave keys in ignition, windows open, doors unlocked. Fill the car with any valuables, medications, and a First Aid Kit (see **Info**).
- ❑ Disengage the garage door opener, in case of power failure.
- ❑ **Place hose or lawn sprinklers on roof** and turn them on.
- ❑ **Attach sprayer nozzles to garden hoses**, connect hoses to interior faucets, and turn water on.
- ❑ **Gather tools** that may come in handy, such as an axe, rake, shovel, and bucket.
- ❑ Be prepared to evacuate. Review and refresh evacuation plans, and have at least two escape routes ready by car, as well as another by foot.

Escape Routes (Wildfire)

If you are caught in a wildfire and have no protection, do not immediately run away unless the fire is already upon you. Instead, stop and think by taking these steps:

1. First, ascertain the **direction of the wind**.
2. Next, ascertain the **direction of the fire**.
3. Finally, **choose your escape route**:
 - ✓ Wildfire nearly always travels in the direction that the wind is blowing. You cannot outrun a fast-moving wildfire. Look for the best escape route that will take you **perpendicular to the fire front**, and **avoid moving uphill**.
4. As you plan your escape route, keep these points in mind:
 - ✓ Many wilderness areas have **fire breaks** and access roads that can provide good escape routes and nominal safety from fire. Additionally, there is a higher chance of being found if you travel on an access road.
 - ✓ **Gullies, lakes, and rivers** will provide protection, even if the fire burns over them. Hunker down and hold your breath as the fire passes over you, and watch for falling debris.
 - ✓ Fires travel more swiftly uphill—do not move to higher ground to escape the fire.

- ✓ If you are surrounded by fire, look for an area where there is **little vegetation** to burn such as a clearing. Wrap yourself in blankets or jackets, hold your breath, and move quickly, without running, through the fire to previously-burned area.
 - ✓ If you are surrounded by fire and there are no clearings or breaks, **quickly dig a ditch in the earth**, cover yourself with as much earth as you can, cover your mouth with cupped hands to protect your lungs from heat, and hold your breath as the fire passes over you.
5. When the fire has passed you, choose an escape route in the **opposite direction of the moving fire**.

Shelter in Vehicle

If you are able to drive away from the fire, do so. While there is a risk of the fuel tank erupting, if your car is immobile and there is no escape route, stay in the vehicle and take these steps:


1. **Roll up** all windows.
2. **Close all ventilation** in the car.
3. **Cover your head and body** with any blankets or jackets that you have to protect yourself from the ambient heat.
4. **Cover your mouth** with a handkerchief to avoid breathing in smoke and fumes.
5. As the fire burns over the car, **hold your breath**.
6. As soon as the fire passes over the car, **exit the vehicle** and escape back through the path from which the fire has just burned.

Creating a Defensible Space

“Defensible space” refers to the area around your home, or other structure, that is treated, cleared, or minimized to better combat a wildfire. This space can slow or reduce the wildfire from spreading to the structure. It should have an approximate 30' radius. To create a defensible space around your home, follow these steps:

- ✓ Use non-combustible materials (tile, slate, or cement shingles, or aluminum) for roofing.
- ✓ Store flammables at least 100 feet away from your home.

- ✓ Keep yard area well-trimmed, with low or small plants near the house.
- ✓ Remove dead branches and debris frequently.
- ✓ Ensure exterior walls are fire-resistant or treated.

 You can contact your local Forestry Department for more information about specific plants, flammability, and safety guidelines.

After a Fire

- If you evacuated the area, do not return until the all clear has been issued by the local authorities.
- Once it is safe to do so, check the exterior of the building, seeking out any sparks or embers on the structure (and immediately extinguish).
- If the structure has been badly burned, it may be unsafe to go back inside. Heed the advice of professionals.
- Check your yard for burning woodpiles, trees, fence posts, or other materials.
- Reassure family, household members, or children. If you were not affected but your community was, consider volunteering to help.
- Reference websites for additional support and resources, such as U.S. Fire Administration (www.usfa.dhs.gov/) or FEMA (www.fema.gov).

FLOOD



Weather and flood reports use specific verbiage to refer to different risks and forecasts. “Flood forecast” means heavy rainfall is expected; “flood watch” means flooding is possible, if not likely; “flood warning” means flooding is eminent or already occurring.

Prepare for Flooding

- Research flood plains in your area. If you are in a flood plain, the likelihood of a flood is far greater than those who are not. Preparedness is key for households in all areas—homes can flood in ANY location.
- Work with an agent on acquiring flood insurance. Do NOT wait to investigate coverage information when a risk is eminent.
- Plan at least two evacuation routes.
- Keep on hand the following preparation supplies: plywood, plastic sheeting, sandbags.
- Keep important papers (insurance, wills, etc.) in a specific location where you can easily find them. Ideally this would be a fire- and water-proof container that you can take with you, if evacuation is mandatory.
- If flooding is expected to be only a few inches or feet, consider moving valuables and furniture off the ground to counter tops, attics, and upper-level floors. Cinder blocks or bricks can also be used to raise some items.

During a Flood

- Listen to the radio for updates.
- If evacuation is optional, consider leaving while there is less traffic and demand for supplies or goods.
- If a flood warning has been issued for the area where you live, evacuate immediately.
- Do NOT try to walk through flooded areas. Access to flooded areas should be by boat only, and with caution.

- Do NOT drive into water—even 6" of water can cause stalling and loss of control.**
- Be mindful of downed power lines, toxic waste in water, and other hazards.

After a Flood

- Roads may be impassable or dangerous.** Do not return until authorities have advised it safe to do so. Be mindful of the risk of mud slides, debris, and washouts.
- Do not eat, drink, or use anything that has made contact with flood waters, including medications, cosmetics, bedding, etc.
- Wear gloves and protective clothing when coming in contact with flood-damaged goods.
- Do not drink water from the tap until it is safe to do so.
- Reference websites for additional support and resources, such as FEMA (www.FEMA.gov). Contact your local emergency management office for more information.
- Contact your insurance company. Consider taking digital photos of flood damage before making alterations or repairs.
- Clean mud and debris from your home as soon as you can to avoid bacteria and mold from causing further damage.
- Do not use electrical outlets** that have been submerged until an electrician tests them.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS



Hazardous materials (HazMats) are stored, used, and transported through most all communities.

HazMat Preparedness

- Learn about **HazMat sites** and transportation routes in your area.
- If you live near an industry using or making HazMat materials, **learn and obey the local warning signals** about dangerous releases.

- If you live in a potential HazMat release zone, make sure you have a shelter-in-place kit.


During a HazMat Release

1. If you discover a hazardous materials release, **call 911** to report it, and leave the area immediately.
2. If you are inside and hear a warning signal, **close doors and windows**, turn off the heat or air conditioner, and turn on the radio or television.
3. If you are **outside and hear a warning signal**, **move inside or stay upwind**.
4. If you are in your vehicle, turn off the ventilation, close windows, and drive carefully away from the incident, preferably upwind.
5. Follow official directives to evacuate or shelter in place.

After a HazMat Release

1. If you are sheltering in place, remain inside until the “all clear” signal is given.
2. If you have evacuated, do not return until local authorities have said that you can.

HURRICANE

 Hurricanes produce sustained strong winds and heavy rain, but most deaths are caused by the storm surge created when the wind drives ocean water inland, producing a higher-than-normal tide.

Hurricane Preparedness

- Plan at least two evacuation routes.
- Organize and locate all prospective emergency supplies, such as candles and matches, flashlights, batteries, etc.
- Check and refresh your supplies for the following supplies: batteries, bottled water, non-perishable food.
- Keep important papers (insurance, wills, etc.) in a specific location where you can easily find them. Ideally this would

be a fire- and water-proof container that you can take with you if evacuation is mandatory.

- Consider using plywood to cover windows, if severe winds are expected.
- Ready yourself and your household for possible power outages, severe weather, and plan at least two evacuation routes.
- Bring inside anything that can blow away, such as outdoor furniture and potted plants.
- If a hurricane watch or warning has been issued and you live in a storm surge area, **immediately** evacuate your family and pets and seek safe refuge. The sooner you evacuate the better—late evacuees risk gas shortages, traffic congestion, and other delays.


During a Hurricane

- Keep an eye on local weather coverage. If your area is already experiencing a hurricane, it may be too late to consider evacuation.
- Keep an eye on your pets, and consider putting them in a pet carrier with food and water if they seem to be nervous.
- Charge all cell phones before power is interrupted.
- Stay indoors, even if weather appears to have improved outside (this is often the eye of the storm). If emergency care or supplies are absolutely necessary, you are safer (though still vulnerable) in a car rather than on foot.
- Secure your utilities (see **Info**). Turn off all appliances to protect them from frequent power surges.
- Fill your bathtub with water for emergency use (e.g., toilet flushing).
- Your safest space indoors during a hurricane is a small, first-floor room near a load-bearing wall. Stay away from windows. Consider closets and bathrooms, if most rooms have large windows or sliding-glass doors.

After a Hurricane

- Avoid downed power lines**, debris, weakened and collapsed buildings.
- Use radio, television, or internet resources (as service allows) to find out where to get help, water, and where water and shelter are available.
- If post-hurricane flooding is anticipated, or if you live in a flood plain, take the next steps to prepare (see **Flood**).
- Drive only if necessary** or to get to a shelter.
- Do not touch any damaged appliances**. Power may come on unexpectedly.
- Follow directions for after power outages (see **Info**).

TERRORIST ATTACK

 Terrorist attacks often most times come without warning. Signal that you are under attack a tremor, heard an explosion or crash, hearing or having difficulty breathing or seeing.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identify the Event | <input type="checkbox"/> Radiological Attack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Response | <input type="checkbox"/> Weaponry Attack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bombing | <input type="checkbox"/> After a Terrorist Attack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bioterrorist Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> Residual Contamination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical Attack | <input type="checkbox"/> Decontamination |

Identify the Event: THINK & OBSERVE

The first step is to observe the situation to determine how to react:

- ✓ **Explosion, blast debris, fire, victims near blast site only = INCENDIARY BOMB ATTACK**
- ✓ **Explosion, debris, victims who do not appear injured, dead animals = NUCLEAR ATTACK**
- ✓ **Sudden widespread illness, dead wildlife and vegetation = BIOLOGICAL ATTACK**
- ✓ **Trouble breathing, eyes tearing, blistering skin, dead wildlife = CHEMICAL ATTACK**

Initial Response

1. Call 911 only once to report what you heard or felt.
2. Immediately turn on your radio or television.
3. Turn to local stations first. If the local stations are off the air, this is likely confirmation of a local attack.
4. Turn to national stations for information.

TORNADO



Tornadoes (sometimes referred to as a twister or a cyclone) have wind speeds less than 110 MPH, though extreme cases can attain 300 MPH winds.

Tornado Preparedness

- Stay current with local weather coverage, via television, radio, or internet sources.
- Keep an eye on your pets, and consider putting them in a pet carrier with food and water if they seem to be nervous.
- Charge all cell phones before power is interrupted.
- Look** for approaching storms. The following weather conditions signify danger:
 - ✓ Dark, green-tinted sky
 - ✓ Large hail
 - ✓ A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
 - ✓ Loud roar, similar to a freight train.
- If you see approaching storms or any of these danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

During a Tornado

If indoors:

- Go to a **pre-designated shelter** area, such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest floor level.
- If there is no basement, go to the **center of an interior room** on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway), away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.

Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck.

Do not open windows.

If in an RV, car, or manufactured home:

Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter.

Never try to outrun a tornado in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.

If outdoors:

Lie flat in a ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.

Do not get under an overpass or bridge.

Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.


After a Tornado

Leave shelter carefully.

Avoid downed power lines, debris, weakened and collapsed buildings. Stay clear of collapsed buildings.

Use radio, television, or internet resources (as service allows) to find out where to get help, water, and where water and assistance are available.

TSUNAMI

 Tsunamis are usually generated by earthquakes, but they can also be caused by underwater landslides and volcanoes. Areas at greatest risk are less than twenty-five feet above sea level and within one mile of the shoreline.

Tsunami Preparedness

Stay current with local weather coverage, via television, radio, or internet sources.

Know what your safest evacuation route is.

If evacuation is mandatory, always evacuate. If an evacuation is encouraged, consider doing so as quickly as possible—late evacuees risk gas shortages, traffic congestion, and other delays.

During a Tsunami

- Listen to your radio, NOAA Weather Radio, or TV.
- Consider evacuating early if you have small children, disabled or elderly people in your family.
- Evacuate at once if you hear an official tsunami warning or detect signs of a tsunami.
- Get to higher ground as far inland as possible.



If you live in a tsunami hazard area and you feel an earthquake, move to higher ground after the shaking stops.

After a Tsunami

- Return home only after local officials say it is safe.
- Continue listening to the radio.
- Give first aid where appropriate.
- Use the phone only for emergencies.
- Stay out of any building that has water surrounding it.
- Be very careful reentering buildings.
- Check your food supplies. If flood waters have touched any of your food, throw it out.

AFTER ANY DISASTER

Depending on the type and severity of a disaster, it may take weeks before order can be restored and life returns to normal. Do your part to help by taking a few simple steps.

1. Stay calm. Keep your family calm. Take a deep breath.
2. Listen to the radio to determine how widespread the disaster was, and if local authorities are directing residents to evacuate.
3. Evacuate the area immediately and calmly if you have been told to do so, making sure each family member takes his/her Personal Evacuation Kit with them.
4. Do not evacuate if you have not been told to do so, unless you believe it is unsafe to stay. In case of a widespread emergency, try to stay off the roads so that emergency vehicles can get through more easily.

5. **Try not to use the phone** immediately after a disaster, as the lines will likely be jammed with emergency calls.
6. **Drink plenty of clean water**, eat regularly, take normal medications, and rest. Do not try to do too much, too quickly.



After a disaster, tempers may be short as people come to grips with what has happened. Do your part to remain calm and reasonable. Expect shortages, long lines, and having many unanswered questions. Do not hoard food and water unnecessarily, and try to help out as you can until order is restored.

Assessing the Damage

After a disaster, you may need to repair or completely rebuild your home. As soon as it is safe, do a thorough walk-through of your house, checking for these conditions, **which may mean that the house is unsafe** or unlivable until repairs are made.

- Cracks in the foundation
- Cracks in load-bearing walls
- Doors stuck, floors buckled, ceilings sagging
- Electrical wires loose, dangling, or damaged
- Gas lines loose or damaged/leaking
- Waste or water lines ruptured

Contact your insurance company as soon as you can. Do not worry if you do not have your policy number, the company can identify you by your home address.



After major disasters, **unethical repairmen and contractors** are known to come in and offer to make repairs on your home. Do not hire anyone who cannot show you a current business license to work in your state, and never give anyone money up front to do the repairs.

Getting Back to Normal

- ❑ Twenty-four hours or so after a disaster, continue to **take care of yourself** and your family, and begin to take stock of the damage that has occurred.
- ❑ **Listen to the radio** periodically to hear any late-breaking news about help on the way, or places to go for help.
- ❑ Try to **contact your out-of-state friends** and let them know where you are, and how you and your family are doing.
- ❑ If you have evacuated, **do not try to return home** until you have been told it is safe to do so.
- ❑ If you have stayed in your home, try to **return to normal routines** as quickly as you can.
- ❑ Remember that everyone is likely to be on edge and outbursts of **anger, frustration, and sadness are normal**.
- ❑ If it safe to go outside, **check on your neighbors and relatives**. Offering to help others will make you feel like you are helping the situation. Similarly, if people offer to help you, take the help and be glad it was offered.



After a disaster or terrorist attack, many survivors will suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). If you cannot sleep, are having “flashbacks,” are suicidal or depressed, seek professional help for coping with your stress and loss. You are not alone, and these feelings, though disturbing, are normal and can be treated.

Mental Health

You and Your Mental Health

Being prepared for an emergency or disaster is imperative. Keep in mind that emergencies are emotionally taxing and draining times, and the best way to combat anxiety and fear is with preparedness.

Make sure you and your family are ready for a disaster by:

- ✓ Reviewing this guide frequently
- ✓ Practicing evacuation plans
- ✓ Keeping informed of potential situations or dangers in your area

In the face of a disaster, many people experience highly emotional responses. While the responses may vary, common states include:

- ✓ Depression or apathy
- ✓ Anxiety, restlessness, irritability
- ✓ Fear or nervousness
- ✓ Changes in sleeping patterns
- ✓ Difficulty concentrating or focusing

Tips for Mental Survival

- ✓ Focus on short-term or “today” rather than worrying about long-term, future issues
- ✓ Accept help from friends, family, and neighbors
- ✓ Communicate your feelings and fears
- ✓ Exercise and eat well

SURVIVAL

Survival means continuing to stay alive in the face of obstacles, dangers, accidents, and difficult circumstances. Surviving in any extreme situation requires knowledge, caution, and calm.


Survival situations may arise based on known risks (e.g., getting lost while hiking, forthcoming severe weather) or unexpected dangers (e.g., an armed assailant, a broken-down car in extreme weather). They may also unfold as a series of events, often with an earlier opportunity to act and thwart escalated risk.

Be aware, however, that no survival information, here or elsewhere, is guaranteed to be completely effective; you must use your own judgment regarding the relative risks and benefits of each situation before proceeding with action.

Be Prepared

The most useful page in this guide is the Emergency Plan of Action form (see **Info**). Before you do anything, ready yourself by filling out this form. Scan or photocopy the form, in addition to gathering any additional information that may prove useful, in the event of an emergency situation. Provide this information to designated emergency contacts.

Mentally prepare yourself for the range of situations that could unfold during your travels or on any given day. What hazards might await you? What risks exist, and when/where might they vary (e.g., at night, in a particular location)?

 While it is impossible to anticipate disaster around every corner, those who are mentally prepared for emergencies are more likely to survive, as well as able to help those around them. Understand that prior knowledge and preparation can be powerful, in a time of need.

SURVIVAL ESSENTIALS

Basic Survival

- 1** Protect and shelter yourself.
- 2** Never underestimate the importance of water and nutrition.
- 3** Understand your location.

What to Bring

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✓ Belt pouch | ✓ Matches or lighter in a waterproof container |
| ✓ Compass | ✓ Pliers |
| ✓ Cordage | ✓ Radio (battery-operated, with extra batteries) |
| ✓ Clothing (a complete change of) | ✓ Sanitary items (such as pre-moistened towelettes) |
| ✓ Emergency rations (three days of water, three days of non-perishable food) | ✓ Tinderbox with fire steel, flint, and tinder |
| ✓ First Aid Kit (x-ref) or medical kit | ✓ Utensils |
| ✓ Flashlight | ✓ Windable watch |
| ✓ Knife | ✓ Water bottle |
| ✓ Magnifying glass | ✓ Whistle |
| ✓ Manual can opener | |

What to Wear

- ✓ Backpack
- ✓ Clothing, insulative (layered, made of wool or synthetic fibers)
- ✓ Clothing, lightweight (layered)
- ✓ Footwear (appropriate for conditions)
- ✓ Hat (with a visor for protection from the sun)
- ✓ Pants with secure pockets
- ✓ Sunglasses



Keep your supplies organized. Pack the items in the order you will need to access them, from first to last.

What to Do



Are you in Danger?

Yes

- Keep calm
- Assess injuries
- Improvise shelter
- Avoid confrontations (animals, nature, interpersonal)

(Assess your situation.)

No



Does anyone know you are missing?

Yes

Notify help
(see **Signaling for Help**).

A rescue party is very likely to be looking for you.

No



Do you have any means of communication?

Yes

You are in charge of your own survival until help arrives or you find it.

Reach out to dispatch help or emergency rescue.

No



Can you survive where you are?

Yes

Move immediately.

- Stay alert
- Consider chance of rescue and resources

Stay put.

- Seek nearby shelter
- Conserve resources, such as food and water

Food and Water

Your body uses water for every single function, from regulating body temperature to protecting joints and organs. While humans can survive without food for quite some time, water is essential for survival. When faced with a dire survival situation, **always prioritize water over food.**

To avoid dehydration:

1. **Collect all of the drinkable water** and fluids you have access to, and continue to collect water at all junctures, assuming the worst.
2. Ration at least **two liters per day**, per person.
3. **Always sip** water when you are rationing. Large gulps may make a dehydrated person vomit.
4. If you do not have enough water, or if you have used half of your water supply and help has not yet arrived, **start collecting water immediately:**
5. Use tarps, plastic bags, or raincoats to collect dew and any rain overnight
6. Trap moisture given off from plants by tying plastic bags around healthy branches
7. Melt and then boil any snow or ice you can find.
8. Remember that animals, such as mammals, bees, and ants, can signify a nearby water supply.

To avoid hunger:

9. Ration food and conserve energy.
10. Take every opportunity to eat or look for food without expending too much energy.
11. Expect to hunt and trap any animals for preparation.
12. Always cook meat.

SIGNALING FOR HELP

Use one or more **distress signals**:

- ✓ At night, use a flashlight to **signal "SOS"** by flashing the light three times for one second each, then flash three times for three seconds each, then flash three times again for one second each flash.
- ✓ During the day, light and tend a **distress fire**. Carefully clear an area of brush and flammable debris in an open area. Burning wet and organic items will produce a light colored, smoky fire. Burning petroleum products (gas, tar, tires) will produce a dark, smoky fire.
- ✓ Day or night, use **road flares** to indicate location.
- ✓ Day or night, set up a visible distress signal in an open area. **Spell out "HELP," "SOS,"** or one of the marks below using logs, stones, or clothing.
- ✓ Day or night, use a **light-colored piece of clothing** tied to a branch or pole as a signal flag.



If you must walk out to find help, take whatever provisions you have with you, mark your course, and leave markers along your path so that you and potential rescuers can find your way back to the site.

Signaling SOS

Moving This Way



SOS



3 short flashes/whistles

3 long flashes/whistles

3 short flashes/whistles

Navigating to Safety

If you must try to find help, or you have exhausted the resources in your location, use these tips to navigate:

1. Assess your situation. (see **What to Do**)
2. If possible, **go back the way you came**.
3. **Leave a visible marker** pointing in the direction you are headed so that, if/when help does arrive, they know which direction to begin their search.
4. If possible, **stay on marked roads**, established footpaths, and trails.
5. Continue to **mark your course** with arrows showing the direction of your travel.

Extreme Weather (see also Disasters)

Normally, you will have some advance notice of an approaching tornado, hurricane, or rainstorm that may produce flooding. The best course of action is to evacuate to safety.

For more information on extreme weather and survival in a disaster, see **Disasters**.

In Your Car

Breakdown in a Rural Area

If your car breaks down in a rural area, you may need to wait longer for help to arrive than you would on a more well-traveled thoroughfare.

If you are in a very remote area where there is danger from wildlife, stay in your vehicle until help arrives. If you leave the vehicle in an attempt to find help, go back the way you came, unless certain that you can find more immediate help ahead.

Breakdown in Bad Weather

Use these guidelines if your car breaks down in bad weather.

Extreme Heat

Take these precautions while driving in extreme heat:

- ✓ If the engine begins to overheat, pull over, **turn the engine off**, and allow the engine to cool.

- ✓ If you cannot pull over, **turn the heater on** in your car. This will help dispel the heat from the engine compartment.
- ✓ **Do not open the radiator cap** on an overheated car until it has cooled down. Wait at least thirty minutes.
- ✓ If your car is stuck in hot weather, **open all windows** and stay inside the car for protection, or find a tree or other shade to protect you.

Extreme Cold

Take these precautions when driving in extreme cold:

- ✓ **Keep the defogger on** to eliminate window condensation.
- ✓ **Keep the heater on** to a comfortable temperature.
- ✓ If you must make a short stop and have plenty of fuel, **keep the engine running**.
- ✓ If stopping for a longer time, **park downhill** in case you need to “push start” your car.
- ✓ Restart the engine every hour or so to keep the engine from freezing.
- ✓ If your car breaks down in cold weather, keep all windows closed and **stay inside the car** for protection. Wrap up in blankets or coats. If possible, restart the engine every hour or so to heat the passenger compartment and engine, and then shut it off. Ignite a signal fire by dipping a rag into the gas tank, draping it over a spare tire, and lighting it.



Do not fall asleep in a car with the engine running.

Submersed Car

If your car lands in water, take these steps:

1. If possible, **get out of the vehicle before it starts to sink**, then swim away from the vehicle and onto shore.
2. If your vehicle begins to sink before you can take action, **roll up all windows and unlock all doors**.
3. **Undo all seat belts**. Use a knife to cut free, if necessary.
4. Continue to breathe normally as the car fills with water. This allows the pressure between the outside and inside of the car to equalize, making opening the doors easier. Tell children to stand on the seats to reach the bubble of air near the top, and hold infants up toward the ceiling.

5. If rescue is imminent, continue to breathe calmly until help arrives.
6. If rescue is not imminent, wait until the car settles or the air pocket is becoming too shallow to comfortably breathe from, have everyone **count to three and hold their breath**, and on three, **push open one door** and **swim to the surface**.

Bombing or Assailant Attack

If under attack, following these steps may save your life.

Staying Out of Harm's Way

The best way to avoid harm is to stay out of its way by following these safety precautions:

- ✓ **Do not travel along on foot.**
- ✓ **Know your surroundings.**
- ✓ Stand tall and **act confidently**. Assailants look for easy targets who can be intimidated.
- ✓ **Report all suspicious packages** or devices to the authorities.

Bombing Safety and Evacuation Strategies

If a bomb threat has been made, local authorities will likely call for an evacuation. Follow their orders and leave the building by the regular fire exits to safety. Do not reenter the building until an official "all clear" has been sounded.

1. Find shelter beside a wall until all debris has settled.
2. If possible, exit the building after the explosion. **DO NOT USE ELEVATORS** and watch for fire and other hazards, such as falling debris.
3. If you are trapped in debris, cover your mouth so you do not inhale dust.
4. Avoid unnecessary movement to keep the debris from further collapse.
5. If you have a whistle, flashlight, or cell phone that you can reach, use them to indicate your location.

6. Repeatedly strike on a pipe or metal object so that rescuers can hear you.
7. **DO NOT YELL**—you may inhale toxic dust. Remain calm and continue to make a repetitive noise until help arrives.

If the explosion causes a fire:

- ✓ Leave the building immediately.
- ✓ If there is smoke, crawl under it to the nearest exit.
- ✓ Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth or sleeve.
- ✓ Feel doors for heat before opening them.
- ✓ Open doors slowly. **Do not open hot doors.**
- ✓ If your clothes catch fire **STOP, DROP, and ROLL** to put them out before continuing your escape.
- ✓ If at work or at home, go to your designated meeting place and account for all family members or workers.
- ✓ **CALL 911.**

Dealing with an Unarmed Assailant

Take these steps when attacked by an unarmed assailant:

1. Scream and **yell STOP** or **LEAVE ME ALONE** repeatedly.
2. Fight back—**do not become passive**. If possible, attack by:
 - ✓ Poking your thumbs into and around the assailant's Adam's apple/larynx
 - ✓ Poking your thumbs into the assailant's eyes
 - ✓ Kicking the assailant's knees from inside the thigh
 - ✓ Jabbing the assailant in the ribs with your elbows
3. If you get the opportunity, **RUN** and scream for help. Find help or shelter as quickly as you can.

Dealing with an Armed Assailant

Take these steps when dealing with an armed assailant:

1. **Do as the assailant tells you to do**. If you are asked to hand over money, wallet, jewelry, do so immediately and without objection. Your life is more important than possessions.
2. **Do not try to disarm the assailant.**
3. Follow the assailant's commands to the extent that you can. **Be polite and calm**; do not give the assailant any additional reason to harm you.

4. **Do not make sudden moves** or do anything that makes it look like you are trying to escape.
5. **If shooting occurs**, do one or more of the following:
 - ✓ Lie flat on your stomach and cover your head with your arms
 - ✓ Crouch behind heavy furniture or a wall
 - ✓ Pretend you are dead
 - ✓ If you must run, run and crouch in a zigzag pattern so that you are not an easy target

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