

Terrorism Preparedness

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About



About Terrorism

Terrorist attacks like the ones we experienced on September 11, 2001 have left many concerned about the possibility of future incidents of terrorism in the United States and their potential impact. They have raised uncertainty about what might happen next, increasing stress levels. There are things you can do to prepare for terrorist attacks and reduce the stress that you may feel now and later should another emergency arise. Taking preparatory action can reassure you and your children that you can exert a measure of control even in the face of such events.

What You Can Do to Prepare for Terrorism

Finding out what can happen is the first step. Once you have determined the events possible and their potential in your community, it is important that you discuss them with your family or household. Develop a disaster plan together.

What to Do If a Terrorism Event Occurs

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- Remain calm and be patient.
- Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.
- If the event occurs near you, check for injuries. [Give first aid](#) and get help for seriously injured people.
- If the event occurs near your home while you are there, check for damage using a flashlight. Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact—do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

A Word on What Could Happen

As we've learned from previous events, the following things can happen after a terrorist attack:

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- There can be significant numbers of casualties and/or damage to buildings and the infrastructure. So employers need up-to-date information about any medical needs you may have and on how to contact your designated beneficiaries.
- Heavy law enforcement involvement at local, state and federal levels follows a terrorist attack due to the event's criminal nature.
- Health and mental health resources in the affected communities can be strained to their limits, maybe even overwhelmed.
- Extensive media coverage, strong public fear and international implications and consequences can continue for a prolonged period.
- Workplaces and schools may be closed, and there may be restrictions on domestic and international travel.
- You and your family or household may have to evacuate an area, avoiding roads blocked for your safety.
- Clean-up may take many months.

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/terrorism>