

# Terrorism

Since the devastating terrorist attacks that rocked the United States in September 2001, many people are concerned about the possibility of future incidents. There are things you can do to prepare for the unexpected and reassure your family in the face of such events.

## Terrorism Defined

- ❑ Terrorism is the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to instill fear
- ❑ Terrorism is used to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological

## Examples of Acts of Terrorism

- ❑ Threats
- ❑ Assassinations
- ❑ Kidnappings
- ❑ Hijackings
- ❑ Bomb scares/bombings
- ❑ Cyber attacks (computer based)

## How to Prepare

- ❑ Prepare a disaster plan and emergency supply kit (see "General Preparedness" section)
- ❑ Be aware of your surroundings
- ❑ Report unusual behavior, suspicious packages and devices
- ❑ Learn CPR and First Aid
- ❑ Do not accept packages from strangers and do not leave luggage or bags unattended in public areas
- ❑ Plan how you will exit buildings you frequent
- ❑ Plan how to exit a building, congested public area or traffic

## Types of Terrorist Attacks

*There can be significant numbers of casualties and/or damage to buildings in a terrorist attack. Some types of attacks can result in medical conditions that may not be apparent immediately but manifest themselves over the course of several hours or days.*

· *Chemical:* the deliberate release of hazardous substances that can poison people and the environment  
*Examples:* mustard gas, arsine, cyanide, chlorine, sarin

· *Biological:* the deliberate release of biological agents or other biological substances that make people sick  
*Examples:* smallpox, botulism, plaque, anthrax

· *Radiological/Nuclear:* the deliberate release of nuclear or radioactive materials  
*Examples:* dispersion devices (dirty bombs), introduction of radioactive materials into the food or water supply, nuclear bomb or attack on a nuclear plant

· *Explosives:* the use of explosives can result in collapsed buildings and fires  
*Examples:* bombs, incendiary devices

## Symptoms Associated with Terrorist Attacks

- ❑ Watery eyes
- ❑ Runny nose
- ❑ Eye pain/blurred vision
- ❑ Confusion
- ❑ Nausea and vomiting
- ❑ High fever
- ❑ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ❑ Skin burns and rashes
- ❑ Blistering of skin/sores
- ❑ Fever
- ❑ Diarrhea
- ❑ Stomach pain

## What to Do During a Terrorist Incident

Depending on the type of incident, there are several actions you should take to prevent injury and minimize the effects of exposure from the event.

- ❑ Listen to local media and emergency management officials for accurate information and instructions.
- ❑ If you are caught in an unprotected area, you should attempt to get up-wind of any contaminated areas and attempt to find shelter as quickly as possible.
- ❑ Cover nose and mouth with a wet cloth.
- ❑ Use common sense – if your skin or clothing comes in contact with a visible, potentially infectious substance, go to an emergency room. Be prepared to be decontaminated. If medical help is not immediately available, be prepared to decontaminate yourself by removing clothing and placing in plastic bag, washing your body with soap and water and changing into decontaminated clothes.
- ❑ If there is a fire, exit the building as quickly as possible, crawling low to the ground.
- ❑ Do not use elevators.
- ❑ If you are trapped in debris, cover your nose and mouth with material.
- ❑ Tap on a pipe or wall so that rescuers can hear where you are.
- ❑ Shout only as a last resort- shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

## Bomb Threats

- ❑ If you receive a bomb threat, get as much information as possible by keeping the caller on the line and recording everything that is said.
- ❑ Notify the police.
- ❑ If evacuating, stay clear of windows, glass doors and other potentially hazardous areas

## Suspicious Letters and Packages

- ❑ If you receive a suspicious package, do not sniff or smell.
- ❑ Leave the room, close the door and prevent others from entering the room.
- ❑ Wash hands with soap and water.
- ❑ Notify the police.