

Nuclear or Radiation Emergencies

Nuclear or radiation emergencies occur when nuclear material or radiation is released or exploded during an accident or attack. An explosion can cause blinding light, heat, fires and dangerous radiation.

During a Nuclear or Radiation Emergency

If you are near the explosion:

- Leave the area right away. If you can tell which way the wind is blowing, move in the opposite direction or upwind. If possible, drive away with the windows closed.
- Find shelter, below ground if possible, but any building or shield will help limit your exposure to radiation. Shield yourself behind thick walls or metal. The thicker the shield, the better.
- Once inside:
 - Turn off all furnaces, air conditioners and fans.
 - Close vents.
 - Close and lock all doors and windows.
 - Take off your clothes and put them in a plastic bag. Seal the bag tightly.
 - Take a shower or wash your skin and hair well with soap and water.
 - Put on clean clothes.
- Listen for reports on the television, radio or Internet. Stay indoors until health authorities say that it is okay to come outside.
- Seek medical care if you are hurt.

If you are not close to the explosion:

Go inside and listen for reports on the television, radio or Internet. State and local officials will check the amount of radiation and tell you whether to stay inside or leave your home.

Your Health

At first, you can get hurt from the heat, fire and flying material from the explosion. Depending on how much radiation is released, over time you may show signs of:

- Red skin

- Feeling tired
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Sore mouth or bleeding gums

It can take from a few hours to days for any signs to appear. Seek medical care if you were near the explosion. Your doctors may check for radiation effects throughout your life. Exposure to radiation can cause serious illness later in life.