



# 5-minute safety talk

## Preparing for a Mass Casualty Event

### What you can do now

Every organization, family, and individual should take time to prepare for an emergency or disaster. These steps can help you get started:

- Know your work, school, and community emergency and disaster plans. If you are not familiar with the plans, contact your supervisor, school administrators, or your local fire department for information.
- Identify an alternative hospital. Hospitals closest to the event are always the busiest.

### What you should do in a mass casualty event

#### At home or in public:

- Leave the area immediately.
- Call 9-1-1. Tell the operator what you saw or know (suspicious persons, packages, or vehicles).
- Follow directions from people in authority (police, fire, EMS, military personnel, or from neighborhood leaders).

#### At work or at school:

- Follow existing evacuation guidelines.
- Follow directions from people in authority (police, fire, EMS, military personnel, or from workplace supervisors or school administrators).
- Temporary shelter may be needed to avoid immediate danger.
- Help others who are hurt or need assistance to leave the area if you are able.

For minor wounds:

- Apply first aid to treat cuts and scrapes and to prevent infection.
- To care for a bleeding cut, apply direct pressure until the bleeding stops.
- Clean the wound by gently pouring clean tap water or bottled water over it.
- Apply a clean, dry bandage. If you see someone who is seriously injured, seek help.
- Do not try to manage the situation alone.

### What you should do after the event

#### When the event is over:

- Follow your family, job or school emergency disaster plan for leaving and staying away from the scene of the event. Returning to the scene might increase the risk of danger for rescue workers and you.
- Follow directions from people in authority (police, fire, EMS, military personnel, or from school or workplace supervisors).
- Call 9-1-1 when you are in a safe area, but only if police, fire, or EMS has not arrived to help injured people.
- Have a back-up plan for transportation.

### Where you should go for care

Go to a hospital or clinic away from the event if you can. Most victims will go to the nearest hospital, which will be more crowded. Hospitals away from the event will be less busy.

### What you can expect at the hospital

- Long waits. To avoid long waits, choose a hospital farther away from the event. While this might increase your travel time, you might receive care sooner.
- Triage. Following a mass casualty event, injuries are generally treated on a “worst first” basis, called “triage.” Triage is not “first come, first served.” If your injuries are not immediately life threatening, others might be treated before you. The goal of triage is to save as many lives as possible.
- Limited information. In a large-scale emergency, police, fire, EMS, and even hospitals and clinics cannot track every individual by name. Keep in mind it may be difficult for hospitals to provide information about loved ones following a mass casualty event. Be patient as you seek information.

Visit [nsc.org/members](http://nsc.org/members) for more safety tips

