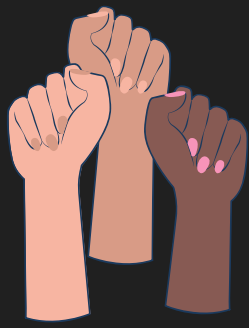


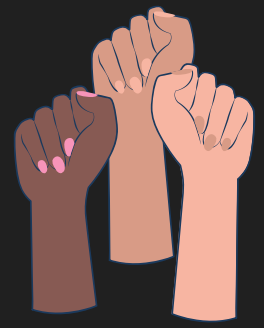
# SAFETY AT PROTESTS

## In This Toolkit:

- How to prepare before going to a protest
- Knowing your rights, with examples
- What to wear
- What to bring
- COVID-19 Considerations
- Police weapons – overview and injury care
- How to perform an eye flush



# Preparing for a Protest



**Designate an emergency contact who is NOT going to the event with you. Notify this person about any necessary legal information, medical conditions, and/or tasks that will need to be done at home should you get arrested** (Do No Harm Coalition). **Write your contact's phone number on your body** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).



**Using a permanent marker, write the phone number for legal aid on at least two DISCRETE places on your body** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**Always have a buddy. Stay within hand-holding distance of them and keep physical contact with them if physical aggression starts. Be open about what your comfort level is before going with them.** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**Plan ahead on how to re-connect with your buddy if you get separated from each other and how to get home safely** (Greenpeace).

**Get plenty of rest the night before and stay hydrated** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).



**Do your research - does the approach of the event align with your values?** (Greenpeace).

# Know Your Rights

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ASSEMBLY**

**"law enforcement must facilitate and not restrict a peaceful public assembly"** (Amnesty International).

**FREEDOM FROM EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE by police in non-violent protests** (Amnesty International).

**RIGHT TO MEDICAL ASSISTANCE without delay** (Amnesty International).

## **FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION**

**"if you are arrested, you have a right to be told the reason" and have quick access to "a lawyer and to your family"** (Amnesty International).

**RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT and "be provided information on how to do so"** (Amnesty International).

**GOOD SAMARITAN LAWS when helping care for others – such as helping flush eyes of chemical agents** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**FREEDOM TO RECORD during an arrest, as long as it does not interfere with what police officers are doing** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

**RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT, except in some states you must provide your name** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

# Examples of Rights

## IF YOU ARE BEING ARRESTED:

- Remain **CALM**
- Say that **YOU ARE NOT RESISTING**
- **ASK FOR A LAWYER...** "do not say anything, sign anything, or make any decisions without a lawyer"
- Do not reach into your pockets unless asked...  
**keep your hands where officers can see them**

## IF THE POLICE PAT DOWN YOUR CLOTHING:

- Saying that you **DO NOT CONSENT** "may not stop the officer from carrying out the the search" but "can help preserve your rights in any later legal proceeding" (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

## PHONE CONSIDERATIONS

- Lock your cell phone using a manual password, not face recognition
- **IN JAIL**, phone calls are recorded and likely listened to

## WITH REGARDS TO REMAINING SILENT:

- Tell the officer "I am going to remain silent"
- You do **NOT** have to answer any questions, except for your name

**Do NOT let anyone make you feel bad for exercising your rights! Fear is a weapon.**

All examples from the Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic

# What to Wear to a Protest

**FULL COVERAGE CLOTHING** – protects from the sun and chemical weapon exposure (Amnesty International).

**HARD HELMET** – to protect from flying debris and rubber bullets (Do No Harm Coalition).

**SHATTER-RESISTANT EYE PROTECTION** (Amnesty International).

**CLOSED-TOED RUNNING SHOES**

**MASK** – to protect from COVID-19 and to avoid facial recognition technology (Do No Harm Coalition).

## **DO NOT WEAR:**

**CONTACT LENSES** – can trap irritating chemicals (Amnesty International).

**JEWELRY** – can be easily grabbed (Amnesty International).

**VASELINE or OIL-BASED LOTIONS** – trap chemicals (Amnesty International).

**TAMPONS** – can absorb chemicals, so use menstrual cup or pads instead (Do No Harm Coalition).

# What to Bring to a Protest

**WATER** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

- to drink – it is important to stay hydrated
- In a bottle that squeezes to flush chemicals out of eyes

**High energy SNACKS** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**CHANGE OF CLOTHES** in a plastic bag, just in case yours get contaminated by chemicals (Amnesty International).

**HAND SANITIZER** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**SUNSCREEN – not oil based** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**PERSONAL MEDICATIONS** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**EARPLUGS** (Do No Harm Coalition).

**SUDECON WIPES – used to help decontaminate the skin from chemical agents. Make them at home using the following recipe from the Do No Harm Coalition:**

20 mL tearless baby shampoo  
95g raw sugar  
1.66g powdered Citric Acid  
120mL purified water

Combine and agitate until solids in solution  
Apply with gauze, *topical application only*

**Can also put solution in ziplock bag with paper towels** (Do No Harm Coalition).

# COVID-19 Considerations



**Distance yourself from others while chanting, as "speaking loudly releases more droplets, increasing the risk of spreading COVID-19" (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic, 2020).**

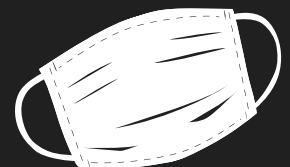
**Stay home if you are sick or experiencing symptoms. You can ways other than attending, such as:** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

- **Donating bail funds, street medics, or local lawyers guild**
- **Sew masks to be distributed at event**
- **Debrief with friends after protest**
- **Serve as an emergency contact for a friend going to a protest**



**Bring hand sanitizer and use it frequently** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

**Wear a face mask and bring an extra to have in case the first gets contaminated by chemical agents** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).



**Try to maintain a 6 feet physical distance from others** (Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).



# Police Weapons

**"The #1 weapon of the police is fear"**  
(Friendly Neighborhood Street Medic).

## PEPPER SPRAY

- Symptoms last for 5–20 minutes
- If sprayed, do your best to stay calm and breathe slowly
- Avoid rubbing the face
- Flush eyes out with water

## TEAR GAS

- A powder that gets suspended in the air from a canister
- Causes burning, tearing of the eyes, spasming of the eyelids, coughing, and bradycardia
- Once moved to fresh air, symptoms should alleviate in 20 minutes
- Remove affected clothing and flush eyes with water

## RUBBER BULLETS

- Can lead to head trauma, eye injuries, and death from effects of lung impact



# Police Weapons

## STUN GRENADES

- produce a loud bang and bright flash to temporarily disorient individuals
- explosion can cause kinetic injuries and severe burns

## STINGER PELLET GRENADE

- produce a noise and light similar to the stun grenade, but also releases rubber pellets and tear gas

## KINETIC INJURY

- Baton use
- Moving vehicle attacks

## ENERGY INJURY

- Tasers
    - can cause trauma from falls, pneumothorax, eye injuries, and dysrhythmias
  - Long Range Acoustic Device
    - produces high-pitched sound
    - causes headaches and disorientation
- > BRING EARPLUGS

## PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURY = TRAUMA

# Care Going Home

[tinyurl.com/ProtestGraphics](https://tinyurl.com/ProtestGraphics)

Avoid entering the house with contaminated clothing. If possible, remove contaminated clothes and put in a plastic bag. Avoid touching other people, pets, furniture, etc.

Wash clothes through a machine **twice** with a strong detergent



Take a cool or tepid shower. Use soap.



Your liver is helping break down the chemical irritants. You can support your liver by not drinking alcohol for a few days after the event. Herbs like dandelion and milk thistle will support the liver too.



Take care of yourself emotionally. What helps you deal with pain, grief, and anger? Talking to some trusted friends (who were with you, or not) can be a helpful way to process.

If you can, avoid watching footage of the event (at least for a few days). It can be re-traumatizing.



brought to you by your friendly neighborhood street medic

# How to Perform an Eye Flush

Always ask consent before treating and touching someone. 1.

Wear gloves to keep you and others safe, and to avoid spreading the irritant. 2.



Contact lenses need to be removed before flushing eyes. This is best done by the person wearing them, but help them wash their hands with soap and water first. 3.

It is easier if the person is kneeling on the ground or has their hands on their knees. 4.

Ask them to tilt their head to one side. Use your thumb to pull their eyelid so their eye is open. (This part can be hard-- the eye reflexively wants to close!) 5.

Use a squirt bottle to flush from the inside corner of the eye (nose side) to the outside corner (toward the ground). 6.

Have them tilt their head to the other side and flush the other eye. 7.

Chemical irritants can often get in the mouth. Having them swish around some water or antacid wash can be helpful. 8.

*The eye flush is not to "neutralize" the chemical; it is to physically push the irritant out of the eye.*



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# Resources



**Do No Harm  
Coalition**  
<https://youtu.be/TV-TrRuRoWs>



**Amnesty International**  
[https://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/safetyDuringProtest\\_F.pdf](https://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/safetyDuringProtest_F.pdf)



**Friendly Neighborhood  
Street Medic**

<https://friendlyneighborhoodstreetmedic.tumblr.com/>



**Greenpeace**

<https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/toolkits/protest-safety-tips-from-greenpeace/>