September is National Preparedness Month:

Practical Skills

Learn basic preparedness and coping skills to prepare and protect your health until help arrives. Always call 911 first in a life-threatening emergency.

The Basics

- Learn the right way to wash your hands. Hand washing is one of the best ways to protect yourself, your family, and others from getting sick.
- Learn how to use a portable generator safely to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Learn how to perform Seizure First Aid to help a person with epilepsy until the seizure stops.
- Learn how to cope healthily with a disaster or traumatic event without the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.

Quick Tips

- Learn how to keep food safe after a disaster or emergency. When in doubt, Throw it out!
- Learn how to make water contaminated with germs safe to drink and where to find alternate sources of water. Bottled water is the safest choice for drinking and all other uses in an emergency.
- Learn how to protect yourself from electrical hazards and help someone who has had electric shock.
- Learn how to give back blows to an infant, and how to perform the Heimlich maneuver on yourself and others in a choking emergency.
- Learn how to take care of wounds after an emergency.
- Learn how to help children cope with the trauma of an emergency.
• Learn **Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs)** to help slow the spread of respiratory illnesses like **pandemic flu**.
• Learn **how to use a fire extinguisher**. Replace your single-use extinguisher after use or every 10–12 years, unless the manufacturer notes an earlier expiration date.
• Learn **how to use an inhaler** if you or a family member lives with **asthma**.
• Learn **how to use an epinephrine auto-injector** if you or a family member is at risk for **anaphylaxis**.
• Enroll in **Until Help Arrives** training to learn how to provide lifesaving care in emergencies.
• People with diabetes: Show people in your personal support network **how to give an insulin shot**.
• Learn how to **drive safely** during an emergency. Turn around, don’t drown!
• Learn **how to cleanup mold** after a flood.
• Learn **how to remove a tick** with fine-tipped tweezers.
• Learn **how to prevent mosquito bites, avoid contact with rodents, and treat a snakebite**.
• Each year, approximately 36,000 people got to hospital emergency departments with chainsaw injuries. Learn **how to use a chainsaw safely** during tree removal after a disaster.
• Learn how to **help someone who was struck by lightning**.
• Learn **how to cover a cough or a sneeze**.
• Learn how to perform **hands-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)** and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED) until help arrives.
• Learn how to **Stop the Bleed** so you can assist injured people in an emergency.
• Know how to **treat burn injuries** in the first few minutes after it occurs.

**Resources**

• **Find a Course** (American Heart Association)
• **Take a Class** (American Red Cross)