

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER. . . Taking Care

from dayna

Chemical weapons (e.g. CS gas, CN gas, OC spray) are used by the state to keep us under control – dictate how we move and when we move, and prevent us from assembling the strength of our numbers. The most common crowd-control less-lethal weapons used today are tear gas (CS) and pepper spray (OC). Both are irritants, and although their short-term effects on our bodies are relatively easy to control their longer term effects on our bodies are more serious.

Some long term (more than 3 months) symptoms reported after exposure to high levels of CS:

- * chronic bronchitis
- * increase asthma symptoms
- * skin lesions, rashes
- * increased chemical sensitivity
- * recurring lung infections, walking pneumonia
- * lowered immunity
- * irregular menstruation
- * extremely heavy or absent menstruation
- * exhaustion

In addition, the propellants used in both OC and CS have produced cancer in lab animals (as if we needed to torture a critter to figure that one out!).

If you or your affinity group anticipate the possibility of encountering or are exposed to chemical weapons, there are a few things you can do to minimize the effects on your body and facilitate a speedy recovery.

- * start at least 2 weeks before, if possible, and continue 2 weeks after
- * sleep lots!
- * eat kelp, magnesium, lots of dark leafy greens, beets, whole grains
- * drink lots of pure water
- * stay away from alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, fried food
- * listen, support, love. ask for help, process, debrief, have patient with yourself and others

SUPPORT YOUR LIVER!

The liver is the body's primary defense against a toxic environment. It is the first step in keeping toxins from building up in your body (and facilitating sickness), and removing them.

- * Nettle infusion (*Urtica Dioica*). add 2 cups boiling water to 2 tablespoons dried or fresh nettles. This is one of the best things you can do to help your body. Ideally, let it steep overnight to extract all of the minerals from the plant. Drink a few cups per day. I usually do big batches (a gallon at a time) and keep them refrigerated for up to 3 days. Even if you can't let it steep overnight, a simple infusion is better than nothing. Nettle can also be added to soups and steps or eaten fresh in the early spring, and tastes a bit like spinach. Will vastly improve your body's ability to detox
- * Milk thistle seed decoction or capsules (*Silybum Marianum*). Add 2 cups cold water to a teaspoon of seeds, bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 5 minutes. For capsules, take 3 a day, ½ hour before meals. Or, grind seed and sprinkle over food. Milk Thistle protects the liver from absorbing toxins, detoxes if you have been exposed to nastiness, and most importantly, actively rebuilds liver tissue. Some folks have reported serious reaction from drinking alcohol while taking Milk Thistle. If you drink lots or have a negative reaction try...
- * Dandelion Root decoction, tincture or capsules. Add 2 cups cold water to 2 teaspoons dried or fresh root, bring to a boil then simmer covered for 5 minutes. For capsules, take 3 per day, ½ hour before meals. Dandelion is a gentle liver stimulant that keeps the juices flowing and seeds up the liver's detox process.
- * Anything bitter! (e.g. grapefruit juice, burdock root, bitter greens, etc.). The "bitter principle" states that the taste of all things bitter will stimulate the production and release of bile from your liver, thus flushing toxins. If you have gall stones, check with an herbalist or naturopath before eating lots of bitters. If you're trying bitter herbs or food, don't disguise the taste – if you do the 'bitter principle' action won't work as well. Other bitter herbs: dandelion root, burdock root, yellow dock root, oregon grape root, goldenseal root....

ADRENAL AND NERVOUS SYSTEM SUPPORT

Our adrenal glands (which make adrenalin) get severely taxed during actions. . . the rush of adrenalin from elation, anger or fear repeated over and over, can shock our nervous and lymphatic systems and throw our bodies off (sometimes permanently).

- * Licorice root tincture or decoction (*Glycyrrhiza Glabra*). CONTRAINDICATION: not for pregnant women
- * Cleavers tincture or infusion (*Galium Aparine*). Supports the entire lymphatic system and aids in detox.
- * Oats (*Avena Sativa*). A bowl of old-fashioned (not instant) oatmeal every morning is a great way to tone and strengthen your nervous system and deal with stress and anxiety. If you don't like oatmeal, make sure take either tea, tincture or capsules of the "milky" part of the oat

LUNG SUPPORT

If you have chronic lung problems or asthma, considering investing in a gas mask or sitting this demo out. The only recorded deaths from chemical weapons have come from respiratory complications. For everyone else, toning your lungs will make a huge difference in your recovery and ability to ward off lung infections (a common occurrence, especially after tear gas), and more chronic lung problems.

- * Mullein (*Verbascum Thapsus*) or Coltsfoot (*Tussilago Farfara*) infusion is best, capsules or tincture is good. Tones, mild expectorant (cleaning!), strengthens tissue.
- * Marshmallow root (*Althaea Officinalis*) decoction. Demulcent, soothes and protects tissue. Chewing the root is an interesting experience – most folks find it pleasant.
- * Stop smoking everything!!

IMMUNE SYSTEM SUPPORT

We hammer our immune systems before and during events. . . not enough sleep, bad food, too much coffee, stress, chem weapons, etc. etc. etc. The best choice for bodies would be to not engage in those behaviors (ya, right!). Second best is to give your immune system a helping hand for the week leading up to the event, and follow the other advice above. This will help prevent the weakness that allows viral and bacterial invasions, and reduce your chances of encountering a reaction to the chemicals that your body can't handle.

- * Echinacea *Angustifolia* or *Purpurea*. I like *Angustifolia* root tincture best, other folks say *Purpurea* leaf and flower infusion works best for them. Start a week before an event, if you anticipate getting sick, or as soon as you notice symptoms of an illness, and continue until all symptoms are gone. If you don't start feeling better after 2 weeks see an herbalist, naturopath, chinese medicine doctor, allopathic doctor, etc.
- * Garlic and Ginger. Eat, drink, lots and lots!
- * Miso. Keeps carcinogens from building up in your body, supports your immune system, an amazing all-round system tonic

FOR STRESS, ANXIETY, EMOTIONAL TRAUMA

- * take care of yourself!
- * TALK about your experiences
- * try Skullcap (*Scutellaria Laterifolia*) tincture. Helps the body to "shift gears". Seems especially effective with caregivers – folks who give a lot of themselves
- * Skullcap/Lavendar tincture. For acute panic or anxiety attacks. Skullcap mellows you out. If you are prone to lethargy, use with thought
- * Milky Oat Tincture for stress
- * Flower Essences. Do some research and find the right blend for you, or talk to a practitioner. Try the PTSD blend by FES (from California) – developed specifically for treating trauma in Rwandan refugees.
- * For acute Fear, Trauma, Overwhelm – Rescue Remedy by Bach (from England)
- * The wonders of Borage: in western european folk traditions, the presence of borage bring courage. This is essential for our part in the world today, and for the body and mind's ability to recover from injury or illness. Try adding borage tincture or flower essence to your life, or even putting a few flowers in your pocket or salad. You'll be amazed.

If you have any persistent or unusual reactions to chemical weapons, please get help.

For more aftercare info or support, check out: www.action-medical.net