FOCUS: FIRST AID

This action sheet is produced as part of the Southern California Earthquake Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an effort to increase the level of individual and family preparedness in this region. It is coordinated by eight southern California counties and the Southern California Earthquake Preparedness Project.

WHY

Emergency assistance may not be available for 72 hours or more after a major earthquake. Those who are uninjured will be relied upon to provide aid to family, friends and co-workers who are not so fortunate. Take first aid courses offered by the American Red Cross and other organizations to help you function more effectively in an emergency. Assemble and store an emergency first aid kit.

FIRST AID SUPPLIES

An alphabetical list of first aid supplies follows. Items considered especially useful after an earthquake are in bold:

- Adhesive bandage strips
- Antacid
- Antibiotic ointment
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antiseptic*
- Aspirin & acetaminophen**
Bags (plastic & resealable)
Bandage (3" elastic)
Bandage (2" roller gauze)
Bandage (4" self-clinging roller gauze)
Basin for washing hands
Blankets
Butterfly (adhesive bandage)
Calamine lotion
Cups (small for drinking)
Eye patches
Eye wash
First Aid Textbook
Flashlight with extra batteries & bulbs
Gauze dressing
Gauze dressing (8" x 7-1/2" pads)
Gloves (surgical latex ones)
Green soap
Ice packs
Matches
Needles for splinters
Paper for writing
Pencil & small sharpener
Petroleum Jelly
Pins (safety)
Pitcher
Sanitary napkins
Scissors
Soap for washing hands
Splints (can be improvised by tightly rolling newspaper, cardboard or magazines)
Sugar cubes/hard candies
Swabs (cotton alcohol wipes)
Tape (2" & 3" non-allergenic adhesive)
Tissue (facial)
Thermometer (oral)
Tongue depressor
Triangular bandage (large)
Tweezers (pointed)
Wash & wipes

It is wise to use bottled water for administering medications and for washing.

*Caution: Some people experience allergic reactions to antibiotics. Ask the victim before treatment. Use only green soap and water to cleanse wounds if in doubt.
**Caution: Some people experience allergic reactions to aspirin. Ask the victim before treatment. Do not give aspirin to children under 16 years of age. Use acetaminophen if in doubt.

Source: American Red Cross, Los Angeles Chapter

EXPERIENCE SAYS…
It also is important to be psychologically ready to meet the crisis of a major earthquake. The following preparedness measures can help minimize the psychological effects:
- Maintain physical care with exercise and sufficient sleep.
- Practice how to respond appropriately during the shaking.
- Have an up-to-date family plan.
- Learn to acknowledge and understand your emotions.
- Talk to others about your feelings.
Training saves lives. Take a First Aid and CPR course. Read the First Aid Handbook.

Many injuries occur after the shaking has stopped, as people evacuate buildings, inspect damage or sift through rubble to retrieve belongings. Keep this in mind and use caution when responding to the disaster.