



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BIOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES

What is a biological emergency?

Bacteria, viruses, and poisons made by bacteria cause biological emergencies. They can be sprayed into the air, used to contaminate (poison) food, and put into drinking water. Some types can also be spread by person-to-person contact.

What should I do *during* a biological emergency?

Listen to a television, radio, or emergency-alert system for instructions. Have a battery-powered radio available, if needed. Officials will tell you whether to stay inside or leave your home. They will tell you where to go if you need to leave your home.

Will a biological emergency make me sick?

You may not know right away if you were exposed to the germs or poisons that caused the emergency. Symptoms depend on the type of germ or poison that caused the emergency. Some common signs include trouble breathing and flu-like symptoms.

In case of a biological emergency, local or state officials will let you know what symptoms to look for. If you feel sick, call your doctor right away. They may tell you to:

- Take off your clothes and put them in a plastic bag.
- Wash yourself with soap and water.
- Put on clean clothes.

What should I do *after* a biological emergency?

Continue to listen to the television, radio, or emergency-alert system for instructions.

Ready in 3 is an emergency-preparedness program for Missouri. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services sponsors the program. **Ready in 3** aims to help residents and communities prepare for many types of emergencies from tornadoes to terrorism. For more information, visit health.mo.gov/emergencies/readyin3.

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