

Staying Safer in the Streets

Some basic suggestions compiled by the Northstar Health Collective

The first aid trainings offered in the coming days go more in-depth and will be more helpful to you than this basic guide. The schedule is available at northstarhealth.wordpress.com.

Use Your Head

- **PLAN AHEAD:** For essential needs, care and supplies. Know what to expect. Know how to get assistance. Plan for how to re-contact your buddies if separated.
- **ATTITUDE:** You are powerful. You can easily withstand most of what the police throw at you, and you are fighting for justice. Remember, pain is only temporary and we are extremely strong.
- **THE #1 WEAPON OF THE POLICE IS FEAR:** Once you control that, pepper spray and other police tactics are more manageable.
- **COMMON SENSE:** Keep your wits, assess what is going down and what needs to be done.
- **BE CALM and FOCUSED** when things get most intense. React to danger or warning signs sooner, not later. Watch for signs of physical and mental problems in yourself and others. Cool down others who exhibit panic behavior.
- **BEWARE OF RUMORS:** They are usually false, and foster fear. Deal with the known truth. A good, general rule, is "if you didn't see it happen, it didn't happen."
- **DOCUMENT** police actions, brutality, and injuries. A cheap, disposable camera is very useful for this purpose, preferably one with a flash mode. Street medics and the National Lawyers Guild will be working together to collect this information.
- **TAKE CARE** of your physical as well as mental health. Relax and center yourself before the action and give yourself plenty of time to decompress and heal afterwards. Do your best to get enough sleep. Try to eat right. Bring some energy bars, nuts or other high-protein, low sugar snacks with you to eat in the streets between meals

What To Wear

- Comfortable, close-toed shoes that you can run in
- Clothing covering all your skin to protect from sun and pepper spray exposure. Consider wearing layers.
- Shatter-resistant eye protection. Sunglasses made of polycarbonate (most cheap ones are) provide some protection against projectiles, consider swim goggles or laboratory-style safety goggles in case of chemical weapons (tape over the vents with duct tape to ensure a good seal).
- Bandana to cover nose and mouth soaked in water or vinegar, it can aid in breathing for a short period during chemical exposure. For longer/greater exposure, consider an inexpensive painters respirator with cartridges labeled for "organic vapors."
- Weather-related gear (i.e. rain gear, sun hat, winter clothing)
- Heavy-duty gloves if you plan to handle hot tear gas canisters
- Fresh clothes in plastic bag (in case yours get contaminated by chemical weapons)
- A cap or a hat to protect you from the sun and from chemical weapons.

What To Bring

- Lots of water in a plastic bottle with squirt or spray top, to drink and to wash off your skin or eyes, if needed.
- Energy snacks.
- Identification and/or emergency contact information **ONLY** if you plan on giving your name in the event of arrest.
- Just enough money for pay-phone, food, transportation.
- Watch, paper, pen for accurate documentation of events, police brutality, injuries.
- Water- or alcohol-based sunscreen.
- Inhaler, epipen, insulin or other meds. It would be wise to keep these items on your person (rather than a backpack). Tell your friends ahead of time if you have specific health needs.
- Several days of prescription medication in original container and doctor's note in case of arrest. See note below regarding jail solidarity and medication.
- Menstrual pads, if needed. Avoid using tampons - if you're arrested you may not have a chance to change it (tampons left in more than six hours increase your risk of developing toxic shock syndrome)

Write the Coldsnap jail support number, **651.356. 8635**, in permanent

marker somewhere on your body.

What Not To Do

- Don't put oil-based sunscreen, makeup, vaseline, mineral oil, or moisturizers on skin as they can trap chemicals. (If you can, wash yourself before the action with castille soap. You're cute when you're crusty, but pepper spray is painful.)
- Don't wear contact lenses, which can trap irritating chemicals underneath.
- Don't wear things which can easily be grabbed (i.e. piercings, dangly earrings or other jewelry, ties, loose hair).
- Don't go to the demo alone, if you can help it - go with an affinity group or some friends who know you well.
- Don't forget to eat food and DRINK LOTS OF WATER.

Medication in Jail

If you are risking arrest and take medication for any health condition that might pose serious problems were your medication to be interrupted (such as: mental health issues/diagnoses, HIV, diabetes, hypertension), you should be aware that you may not have access to proper medication while you are in jail.

A letter from a doctor will help. Give a copy to the legal team before the action, keep one for yourself. It should include the following information: your name, diagnosis, that you must have access at all times to your medication, a list of all meds that you require, a statement that you must be allowed to keep meds on your person so that they can be properly administered, and that no substitutions are acceptable. Since your name will be on the document, you may want to hide it on your body as a sort of insurance policy - perhaps you won't need it and then could eat it and participate in jail solidarity tactics, but perhaps you'll be worn out already at the time of arrest and will want to cite out in order to take care of yourself.

Better to cite out than pass out. Your meds will need to be in their original prescription bottle in order for you to keep them, but you also could conceal an emergency supply on your person if you want.

Another option to further ensure your ability to participate in solidarity is to have the document as described above but with a photo of yourself

rather than your name. Your prescription bottle would then need to have your name cut out of the label, while leaving the rest of the label intact. Please make sure that your affinity group and the legal team is aware of your needs so they can help care and advocate for you.

A Note on Chemical Weapons

If you've been exposed to pepper spray or the like and have the opportunity to take a shower, make sure it's a cold one. Heat opens up your pores.

Seal your contaminated clothes in a plastic bag and when you can, wash them with a harsh detergent.

A Note About Sexual Violence at the RNC

A group of Twin Cities folks are offering sexual violence advocacy, resources, and support with the goal of transforming rape culture in part by trying to create more empowering options to those affected by sexual violence. They will have an advocate available during the RNC at the Northstar Wellness Center (Aug. 29th - Sept. 5th) and a 24 hour support phone line at 651.434.2265 (beginning August 25th). They also have the capacity to offer safer space options and transit to and from if needed.

Local 24 hour sexual violence crisis lines also exist in the Twin Cities and can be contacted at (Minneapolis) 612.871.5111 and (St. Paul) 651.643.3006.

Clinic

A clinic and mental health Wellness Center will be set up closer to the RNC. It'll be here so you can be healthy, so please utilize it if you need care. Details of the location and hours will be available closer to the RNC.

northstarhealth.wordpress.com

northstarhealth@gmail.com—get in touch with question and for more information on how to donate

action-medical.net

blackcrosscollective.org