

Black Rock City First Aid Booklet

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Basic Prevention

Bring these! Use these!!

Water

Water, with or without electrolytes. Never be without a water bottle close at hand, day or night. If you aren't peeing every couple of hours you aren't drinking enough water. PISS CLEAR!!

Sunscreen & Lip Balm

You are trying to protect your skin from UV radiation as well as the alkaline dust. Wear sunscreen. Wear lip balm.

Eye, Nose, and Lung Protection

Goggles, mask, saline for eyes and nose; Sunglasses are a must, so bring a couple of pairs in case you lose a pair. We can't stress enough that these simple items will dramatically improve comfort and happiness!

Skin Protection

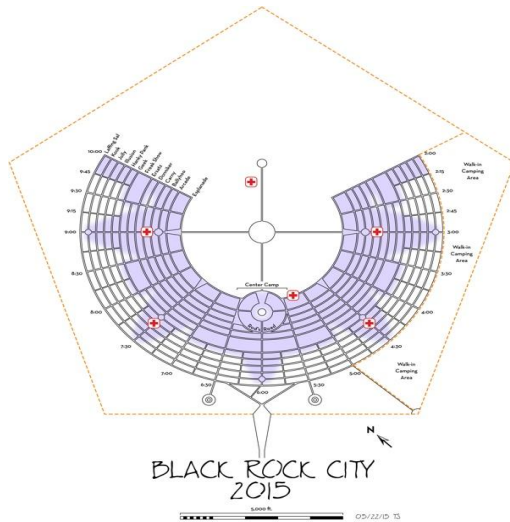
Wear protective clothing like long sleeves, hats, pants, and/or sunscreen. Sunburns really suck and are bad for you. Wear shoes. While the playa feels luscious between your toes it is very alkaline and will quickly start messing with your feet. If you do go barefoot or wear sandals, be sure to wash your feet with a 1 part vinegar: 3 part water solution, then lotion up and put on some closed shoes

Preventing Genital and Urinary Problems

We don't need to tell you how smart it is to wear a condom when having sex. That's a no-brainer. But if condoms are your preferred birth control method bring some Plan B too. Condoms become remarkably fragile on the playa and are notorious for breaking.

Urinary tract infections are abundant on the playa, likely because people aren't drinking enough fluid and/or not using that ever-smart hygiene technique of wiping front to back. And be sure you pee as soon after sex as possible.

Getting Help



1) Look for the closest Medical Station- there are 3 (5:15 and Esplanade, 3&C, and 9&C). Look for the large, lit red cross on top.

2) Find a Ranger or anyone with a radio. They can call for help. There are ambulances with paramedics that can be dispatched to your location. **DO NOT CALL 911 ON YOUR PHONE- getting help that way can be unreliable in BRC.** Make sure that you clearly identify the location when requesting help and that someone remains in the street to direct responders to the

incident.

3) You can purchase a radio and program it to **451.9000 MHz with a PL tone of 91.5** to reach the Black Rock City 911 Dispatch. This is limited to 4-watt power output (typical limit of most handheld radios). Please refer to your user manual to see how to program your radio.

Mental Health

Remember the Acronym **H.A.L.T.** while you're in BRC. Am I **H**ungry? **A**ngry? **L**onely? **T**ired? Chances are if you're feeling overwhelmed, one of the H.A.L.T. monsters has grabbed you. Eat something, take a breath, talk to a friend, and take a nap.

If someone in your camp is freaking-out but perfectly healthy, try to calm them down and reduce their stress by getting them to a quieter place with fewer stimuli. Talk with them, reassure them, give them plenty of water, and remind them that the duration of the bad feeling is finite and will get better soon. If the person is too distraught to do these things you may want to bring them to a medical station or Zendo at 5:30 and Esplanade.

If you feel that they may endanger themselves or others...

Find a Ranger, a person with a radio, or go to a medical station for help.

Explain the situation with as much information as possible, i.e. their location, what they took, how much, how long ago, is this the first time they tried this? Have someone stay with the person until help arrives. If they are uncooperative...keep them in sight in order to point them out to Rangers or ESD.

Managing Emergencies

Fainting, Passing Out, or Unresponsive

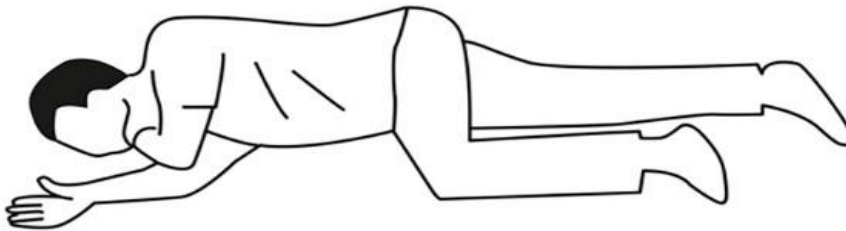
Anyone who can not be roused with a vigorous shake and shout is an automatic emergency call; immediately send someone to get help.

Are they breathing? If you aren't sure, use the head tilt, chin lift (like in the picture to your right) to open the person's airway and check for breathing with "Look, Listen and Feel". Put your ear close to the person's mouth, **Look** towards their chest to see if it is rising and falling, **Listen** for sounds of breathing, **Feel** for breath on your cheek. If they aren't breathing check for a pulse. If the person is **truly unresponsive, pulseless, and not breathing**,



start CPR. If you don't know how, yell for help! Someone will know how. If the person is breathing, keep the airway open until help arrives or the person wakes up. If they start to vomit, roll them away from you and onto their side so they don't choke.

If you have an intoxicated campmate, who is breathing but otherwise just completely out, place them on their side like this:



Keep someone with them to make sure they don't choke on their vomit, and to monitor their condition. If there is any chance that this could involve a combination of drugs and alcohol, call for help. Some drugs (like GHB and Ketamine) mixed with alcohol can slow or stop breathing. This is a life-threatening condition so get immediate help !!!

Heat-related Conditions

HEAT EXHAUSTION OR HEAT STROKE?

HEAT EXHAUSTION SYMPTOMS

1. Faint or dizzy
2. Excessive sweating
3. Cool, pale, clammy skin
4. Nausea, vomiting
5. Rapid, weak pulse
6. Muscle cramps

HOW TO TREAT IT

1. Move to cooler location
2. Drink water
3. Take a cool shower or use cold compresses



HEAT STROKE SYMPTOMS

1. Throbbing headache
2. No sweating
3. Body temp above 103°
Red, hot, dry skin
4. Nausea, vomiting
5. Rapid, strong pulse
6. May lose consciousness

HOW TO TREAT IT

1. Get emergency help
2. Keep cool until treated

Go to a medical station if:

- The person is disoriented and/or confused
- Symptoms get worse or don't show some improvement within an hour or so after starting rehydration
- The person has persistent nausea or vomiting
- The person doesn't pee within two to three hours of resting and hydrating

Common Playa-related Conditions

Playa Foot and Blisters

Playa foot is easy to avoid by wearing shoes that don't allow your feet to be exposed to the dust. pour a cup of vinegar (it has a 2.2 pH) into a washbasin with water (try using the water out of your cooler) and soak your damn feet for 15 – 20 minutes, dry off, apply lotion,

Don a good pair of socks then put on your fancy boots and get back at it!

Use moleskin before a blister develops. Better yet, wear gloves when building, and socks with your playa shoes to prevent those bastards in the first place. If you get a blister, cut moleskin into a little donut so the hole in the donut fits around the sore area or blister, not over it! (You are trying to make a little cushion that takes the pressure off the sore spot).

Cuts and Abrasions

Cuts and abrasions are very common and treatment is simple:

- Plain soap and water. These are the absolute best thing to clean wounds with.
- Rinse any foreign material out of the wound
- Cover with a clean bandage, use triple antibiotic cream, and keep it clean
- For large abrasions on arms or legs you can use Coban, a self-adherent elastic wrap that functions like a tape, but sticks only to itself, to hold wound dressings in place.
- Use pressure to control bleeding if necessary. If you can raise the injured part above the level of your heart that will help with bleeding and pain.

Rash

Itchy red spots can be caused by several different things: heat rash, chafing, allergic reaction, or bacterial infection. Figuring out which one is causing the problem can be a challenge.

- **If a rash has blisters with pus, is hot to the touch, and/or is associated with a fever, it needs to be covered with a dry dressing and be seen at the Medical Station immediately.**
- **Allergic reactions:** Hives are red blotchy spots. There can be just a few or they can cover the entire body. In severe cases, hives and difficulty breathing are life-threatening medical emergencies requiring immediate emergency treatment. **People with known allergies often carry Epinephrine. This could save their life so help them find and administer the injection if they need it.** If it's mild, Benadryl (Diphenhydramine) helps.
- **Heat rash:** Minor, itchy rashes are more likely caused by the irritation, (chafing) or plugged sweat glands. Benadryl or hydrocortisone cream are your friends.
- Rash in the crotch, between your butt cheeks, or under your arms-Clean things up, dry them out, wear loose clothes, use hydrocortisone cream, witch hazel, or baby ointments (Zinc oxide, Desitin cream, .. there are lots).

Sprains and Strains

Go to a Medical Station or get help to come to you if there are signs or symptoms of a possible broken bone:

- There is a "popping" or "snap" when the injury occurred, or a crunching/grinding sound with movement
- Any obvious deformity.
- The person can't move or use the injured joint or limb
- There is numbness or tingling beyond the injury site
- There is significant swelling, pain, or deep wound

For minor sprains and strains, you can control swelling with "R.I.C.E." Therapy

- **Rest** the sprained or strained area. If necessary, use a sling for an arm injury or crutches for a leg or foot injury. Splint an injured finger or toe by taping it to an adjacent finger or toe.
- **Ice** for 20 minutes every hour. Never put ice directly against the skin or it may damage the skin. Place ice in a plastic bag and wrap it in a cloth.
- **Compress** by wrapping an elastic (Ace) bandage firmly (not tightly) around the joint or limb.
- **Elevate** the area above heart level if possible.

Manage pain and inflammation with over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or acetaminophen (Tylenol).

Trauma (falls, crashes, blunt force, hits, and smacks)

Seek immediate medical attention for the following:

- Absolutely any fall or hit that results in a loss of consciousness or sustained confusion and disorientation
- Any fall, with injury, from a height over 6'
- Dizziness, blurred vision, difficulty standing
- Nausea and vomiting after hitting your head

Anyone who has lost consciousness from a fall or crash should not move or be moved until aid arrives.

For less severe situations:

- Elevate the injured area

- Ice for 15 minutes at a time (see Sprains and Strains above for more details)
- Use anti-inflammatory medications like Tylenol or Advil.
- Watch. More often than not the pain is worse the next day, so expect that.

Diarrhea

You may take an anti-diarrheal of your choice: Imodium, Pepto-bismol, and Kaopectate are some examples.

If you think food made you sick go to a Medical Station. If there are more than two people in your camp who develop symptoms at the same time there could be a problem that needs to be tracked down so be sure to tell them this too.

Constipation

- Hydrating early and often usually helps keep this from happening on the playa.
- Use a stool softener or a mild laxative if needed.
- Drink water, eat dried fruit, and take your time in the potties when the urge strikes.

Abdominal Pain

Seek help if:

- you have a fever,
- or the pain is severe or cannot be alleviated with the over the counter meds you bought

Always err on the side of caution...if in doubt....find out!

Eye Irritation

- Remove contacts, and use eyewash solution or saline to immediately flush any foreign material out.
- Tilt your head back, hold the eyelid open with your fingers and slowly flush one eye at a time, from the bridge of your nose, letting the saline run over the eye and down your cheek.
- You can also use an eye cup; fill it with your eyewash solution, tilt your head forward, open your eye and hold the cup against the socket as you tilt your head back, allowing the solution to bathe your eyes.
- Keep the dust out of your eyes, it's the ph of the playa that is actually burning your eyes. Your eyes will heal quickly, but only if you protect them.

Nose Irritation

A little prevention can go a long way to head off problems so try a little squirt/mist of nose spray a couple of times a day for instant relief!

To use a Neti pot:

- After preparing a warm saline solution($\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 teaspoon salt to 2 cups warm water) add it to the pot, lean over your basin, tilt the head sideways so your face is horizontal, and insert the neti pot spout into the upper nostril. Be sure the spout is fully inserted so water cannot leak out that nostril.
- Open your mouth and breathe through your mouth while you gently pour.
RELAX.

Sore Throats & Coughs

Coughing more than usual is typical on the playa because... dust. However coughing that is painful, bloody, or associated with difficulty breathing, needs to be seen at a Medical Station.

The playa dust is not the only source of body insults; remember that our community comes together from around the world and brings with them a wide variety of germs looking for hosts (you).

If you have a cough and/or sore throat:

- wear a mask to prevent irritation
- drink lots of water.
- For sore throats, try gargling with warm saltwater.
- If the condition persists or worsens, or if you develop a fever, head to the Medical Station to get checked out.

COVID-19

The COVID pandemic continues to plague the planet and we must put on our radical self-reliance and civic responsibility hats to be part of the solution to squashing this beast. While not a “playa-related condition” it may come knocking so we’re addressing it in this booklet. Be aware of the symptoms in yourself and others:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle and body aches
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea

- New loss of taste or smell

Bring a stash of COVID rapid tests and test yourself if you experience any of the above symptoms. If you test positive, you must isolate yourself for 5 days. If you must be around others for some reason, stay 6 feet away and wear a mask. We are a community and must take care of each other. More on COVID can be found on the CDC website (CDC.gov)

Urinary Tract Infections

If it **hurts or burns** when you pee, if you have urine that is **very dark** (coke color) or **bloody red**, or you have **severe middle back pain**, head to a Medical Station.

Burns

- Red painful burns without blisters or char are *first-degree* burns.
- Any burn that raises a blister is a *second-degree* burn.
- If there are charred edges that's a *third-degree* burn.

Any 2nd-degree blister bigger than a silver dollar or ANY 3rd-degree burn needs to go to the Medical Station.

- Do not remove clothing stuck to a burn
- Remove the heat source (ashes, hot coals). Flush or soak with cool water. Do it over your basin so you can reuse the water for 15 minutes.
- Do not put ice, ointment, or cream of any kind on a burn
- Cover with a clean dry non-adherent dressing (telfa) or clean sheet
- For burns over large areas, and/or involving the face, eyes, airway, or groin call for immediate help.

The concern with any burn is infection. Burns are serious and painful;. If you are treated for a burn make sure to follow the instructions and return for a dressing change and check-up as required.

First Aid Checklist

- Water, 1 gallon per day, minimum**
- Electrolytes to add to your water bottle (Gatorade powder works)**
- Sunscreen**
- Lip balm with SPF**
- Body lotion/moisturizer**
- White vinegar**
- Moleskin**
- Extra socks, (real socks that will absorb sweat and protect your feet)**
- Washbasin, large enough for both your feet (tip: fill it with water from your cooler)**
- COVID Rapid Tests**
- Masks**
- Gloves (nitrile)**
- Triple antibiotic cream**
- Goggles**
- Mask or some form of respiratory protection**
- Nasal wash, saline (Consider a Neti Pot or 10 cc syringe to help get the saline up in there)**
- Eyewash, saline**
- Sunglasses, extra pair**
- Many sets of earplugs, try them out at home, some fit better than others. These little things are lifesavers.**
- Prescriptions in their original container**
- Tampons and pads**
- Body wipes, lots of them!**
- Safe sex supplies**
- Lights, headlamps, battery-operated light source**
- Liquid hand soap**
- Pee funnel**
- Tetanus booster before you leave home!!**
- First Aid Kit, you can buy a good-sized one for about \$25.00 +/-**
 - One box of assorted sizes of adhesive bandages, aka “Band-aids”
 - 1 roll of adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
 - 1” and 2” Coban or similar bandage wrap (works better than “Band-aids” and tape in the dust!)
 - 10 or more antibiotic ointment packets (approximately 1 gram)
 - 10 or more antiseptic wipe packets
 - Aloe vera gel for minor burns and sunburn (oh yeah, a sunburn IS a minor burn)

- Benadryl for minor allergic reactions (Hives), itching, and a sleep aid too
- Bottle of anti-inflammatories (such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol)
- Antacids (such as Maalox)
- Anti-diarrheal medication (such as Immodium)
- Laxative (such as Ex-Lax)
- Plan B (if you use condoms as a birth control method)
- Saline eyewash solution
- 1 blanket (space blanket)
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)←for mouth to mouth...let's try to avoid this
- 1 instant cold compress or zip lock bags to put ice in
- 2 pairs of nonlatex gloves
- 10 or more hydrocortisone ointment packets
- Bandage scissors or Medic shears
- 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- One box sterile gauze pads (3 x 3 inches)
- One box sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- Oral thermometer (non-mercury/nonglass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- Make a small kit out of the above supplies to have in your pack, along with your map and water bottle. (Have this in a small ziplock, or just stuff it all into one of the exam gloves.)
 - Moleskin
 - Antiseptic wipes
 - Adhesive bandages
 - Antibiotic cream
 - Sunscreen and lip balm with SPF
 - 1 pair exam gloves

Optional items for a camp-sized first aid kit

- Finger cots- these are great for keeping the dirt and grime out of wounds. Use them in conjunction with a dressing.
- Alcohol wipes- use these to remove grease from around a wound before applying Benzoin. You can also use them to sanitize things.
- Tincture of Benzoin- this comes in individually wrapped packages. They are swabs that you wipe on the skin around a wound (after cleaning said wound) to help the bandages stick.
- Steri-strips- these are better than butterfly bandages for keeping wounds closed; use in conjunction with the Benzoin mentioned above.
- Magnifying glass- to look for slivers and little tiny things.
- Afrin- for nose bleeds
- Two boxes of Plan B, just in case