

Actions to take after a disaster

→ Post-disaster actions

Exercise caution, Act promptly

- Help the injured
- Check lifelines
- Using telephones after an earthquake
- Rules for living in a shelter
- Toilet use when water supply is cut off
- Examples of support you can offer

Post-disaster actions

Help the injured

If anyone is injured, help them immediately and conduct first aid to the best of your ability.

Stopping bleeding

Who needs attention?

If someone is injured and losing a large amount of blood from an external wound, you must stop their bleeding immediately. First, check the type, nature and size of the wound as well as the person's complexion. Make sure he or she does not have any deformed limbs or symptoms of shock (i.e., cold sweat, facial pallor, cold extremities) and calmly assess the state of his or her entire body. Arterial bleeding is the most serious type of bleeding because a large amount of blood can be lost in a very short period of time and the injured person can bleed to death. It is characterized by bright red blood spurting out in sync with the heartbeat. Venous bleeding is typified by a steady flow of blackish-red blood, and if left unchecked, it can lead to substantial blood loss. Measures to stop this kind of bleeding are also necessary.

Direct pressure method

This is a technique for stopping bleeding by covering the bleeding area with a clean towel or piece of gauze and applying firm, direct pressure. If you cannot stop the bleeding with one hand, use both hands and the weight of your body to apply steady pressure. Most types of bleeding can be controlled with this method.

Stop blood-borne infections

When you are trying to stop someone's bleeding, make sure their blood does not come into direct contact with your skin. Wear rubber gloves, if they are available, or use plastic bags or other items to prevent direct exposure to blood. Make sure you wash your hands when you are done applying first aid.

To Use AED

You may use an automatic external defibrillator (AED) even if you have not been trained, but you should take a Basic Life Support course if you have the chance.

Burns

Immediately run the affected area under cold water for at least 15 minutes but avoid using high-pressure water. If the person is wearing clothes, run the water over their clothes. If the person has suffered a chemical burn, wash the affected area as you cool it in running water. To avoid dehydration, let the person drink water if they ask for it. Do not apply any medication to the burned area until the person receives a diagnosis from a doctor.

Broken bones

If you suspect a bone has been broken, apply splints and immobilize the affected area. Remember the following points: 1) Be careful not to move the fractured bone and the joints above and below it; 2) If the area is bleeding, stop the flow of blood first; 3) If the bone has pierced the skin or is otherwise deformed, do not forcibly try to straighten it; 4) Use splints to immobilize the joints above and below the broken bone. Apply first aid carefully, paying attention to the person's overall condition.

Check lifelines

Disasters often cut lifelines. Respond calmly until they are restored.

Gas

Be sure to shut off the main valve. Even if service is restored, do not turn on the valve until a gas company employee inspects your equipment. If you notice a gas leak, open a window to ventilate the room. Turning on a ventilation fan could cause an explosion.

Electricity

Shut off the circuit breaker. This is the lifeline that is restored the quickest. Inspect your electrical equipment carefully before turning the power back on as there is a risk of short circuiting or shock.

Water

Get into the habit of leaving your bathtub full of water. Water from your apartment building's water tank and well water can be used as domestic water.

Telephone

If telephone service is interrupted, you will not be able to use phones, fax machines or the internet. You may also have trouble getting connections on mobile phones. Decide an emergency contact person in case of emergency. Briefly tell them you are safe and take other measures to streamline information flow.

Using telephones after an earthquake

After an earthquake, accident or other disaster, there is a sudden rush in telephone use which results in difficulty connecting and making phone calls in the disaster area. Because of this, many issues arise when trying to confirm safety and contact fire and police departments.

Telecommunication companies make various efforts to secure communication lines by providing appropriate network controls, disaster telephones, disaster voice message dial systems, and temporary telephone installations in times of disaster.

Keep the following points in mind when using the telephone so that safety can be confirmed in an efficient manner.

- (1) Telephone lines have a limited capacity. Keep your calls as short as possible.
- (2) If you are having trouble making contact with regular service, try one of the following options:
 - Disaster Emergency Message Dial (171)
 - Disaster Emergency Broadband Message Board (web171)
 - Mobile phone disaster message services (NTT Docomo, au, SoftBank, emobile, Willcom)
 - Mobile phone e-mail
- (3) It is easier to make calls from disaster-stricken areas using pay phones.
- (4) It is useful to decide with your friends and family how you will confirm each other's safety in the event of a disaster.
- (5) It is difficult to establish a connection to disaster-stricken areas immediately after a disaster due to the large number of calls being made.

To ensure that emergency calls within the affected area can be made smoothly, avoid making non-urgent calls and using the redial function and try calling back later.

Disaster Emergency Message Dial[171]

To leave a message about yourself

Dial "171". Press "1". Enter your phone number. Record your message

- ① Dial "171"
- ② Listen to the prompts and press "1" (No PIN)
- ③ Enter your phone number
- ④ Record a message of 30 seconds or less

*With PIN: Dial 171, press "3", enter 4-digit PIN, enter your phone number, record your message

To play another person's message

Dial "171". Press "2". Enter other person's phone number. Play message

- ① Dial "171"
- ② Listen to the prompts and press "2" (No PIN)
- ③ Enter the other person's phone number
- ④ Play the message

*With PIN: Dial 171, press "4", enter 4-digit PIN, enter other person's phone number, play message

Source: User guides for each disaster message service

Disaster Emergency Message Service Trials

- 1st and 15th of every month
- Disaster Prevention Week (8/30 - 9/5)
- Disaster Prevention Volunteers Week (1/15 - 1/21)
- First three days of New Year (1/1 - 1/3)

*Trials may not be available if an actual disaster occurs. (Sponsor: Telecommunications Carriers Association)

Rules for living in a shelter

In a shelter, everyone suffers some uncertainties and inconveniences. Remember these rules for communal living and act with empathy.

- Do not use fire, smoke, drink or wear shoes inside the shelter.
- Cooperate with each other to make life in the shelter easier.
- If you fall ill, contact the shelter headquarters (office).
- Cooperate as much as possible with recovery efforts around the shelter.
- Follow the shelter's instructions for distributing relief supplies, disposing garbage and using the toilet.

<Toilet use when water supply is cut off>

The use of flush toilets is prohibited until a water supply system is established. The following is an example of a water supply system that can be used to flush toilets.

- If the shelter has an emergency well, use that water for flushing toilets.
- If you are able to use water from a swimming pool, etc., use that water for flushing toilets.
- If an abundant amount of water is supplied by government water trucks, etc., and there is more than enough for drinking water, it may be used to extinguish the fire.
- If near a river or lake, collect water and take it to the site.

In times of disaster, it is important to remember to try to work together to support those with disabilities, illness or injury when requested, and to safely evacuate while offering as much support as possible in situations where you notice trouble.

Remember that it is important to work with those around you during a disaster. For example, if you are in a classroom, work together with students and the teacher, share information, provide guidance, and offer support.

Additionally, for those who need additional support, it is important to try to raise awareness of disaster countermeasures by regularly asking those around for assistance, etc.

Examples of support you can offer are provided below. If providing support, it is important to ask the person in need of assistance what they require while you provide support.

Examples of support you can offer

Persons with vision impairments

Verbally explain the current conditions of the area and any visual information displayed on disaster boards, etc. (Verbal guidance)

Confirm the evacuation route, and evacuate while assisting the person. (Physical guidance)

Persons with physical impairments

It may be difficult to provide support to persons in wheelchairs or who use walking canes. If you feel that providing support would be too difficult to do alone, ask for assistance from those around you.

Persons with hearing impairments

Use gestures or writing to visually explain auditory information such as loudspeaker announcements and evacuation instructions.