



SAFETY CHRONICLES

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COVID-19: Vaccine Guidance

By Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

It's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, stay at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.

Because COVID-19 is a new disease with new vaccines, you may have questions about what happens before, during, and after your appointment to get vaccinated. These tips will help you know what to expect when you get vaccinated, what information your provider will give you, and resources you can use to monitor your health after you are vaccinated.

Before Vaccination

- See if COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for you right now.
- Learn more about the [different types of COVID-19 vaccines and how they work](#).
- Learn more about the [benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccination](#).
- When you get the vaccine, you and your healthcare worker will both need to wear masks that cover your nose and mouth. Stay 6 feet away from others while inside and in lines. [Learn more about protecting yourself during visits to the doctor or a pharmacy](#).

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine with other vaccines

Wait at least 14 days before getting any other vaccine, including a flu or shingles vaccine, after you get your COVID-19 vaccine. Or if you get any other vaccine first, wait at least 14 days before getting your COVID-19 vaccine.

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine within 14 days of another vaccine, you do **not** need to be revaccinated with either vaccine. You should still complete both vaccine series on schedule.

When we have more data on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines given at the same time as other vaccines, CDC may update this recommendation.

When You Get Vaccinated

- You should receive a vaccination card or printout that tells you what COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, and where you received it.
- You should receive a paper or electronic version of a fact sheet that tells you more about the specific COVID-19 vaccine you are being offered. Each authorized COVID-19 vaccine has its own fact sheet that contains information to help you understand the risks and benefits of receiving that specific vaccine.
- All people who get a COVID-19 vaccine should be monitored on-site. Learn more about [COVID-19 vaccines and rare severe allergic reactions](#).

After Vaccination

- With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need two shots in order for them to work. Get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first one, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second shot.
- Ask your healthcare provider about getting started with **v-safe**, a free, smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccination. V-safe also reminds you to get your second dose if you need one. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/vsafe.
- It takes time for your body to build protection after any vaccination. COVID-19 vaccines that require 2 shots may not protect you until a week or two after your second shot.



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Eye Safety

By John Davis

Eye injuries in the workplace are very common. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports that every day about 2,000 U.S. workers sustain job-related eye injuries that require medical treatment. However, safety experts and eye doctors believe the right eye protection can lessen the severity or even prevent 90% of these eye injuries.

Workplace eye protection is needed when the following potential eye hazards are present:

- Projectiles (dust, concrete, metal, wood and other particles).
- Chemicals (splashes and fumes).
- Radiation (especially visible light, ultraviolet radiation, heat or infrared radiation, and lasers).
- Bloodborne pathogens (hepatitis or HIV) from blood and body fluids.

In the event of an eye injury, here are the steps to take for first aid from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Specks in the Eye:

- Do not rub the eye.
- Flush the eye with large amounts of water.
- See a doctor if the speck does not wash out or if pain or redness continues.

Cuts, Punctures, and Foreign Objects in the Eye:

- Do not wash out the eye.
- Do not try to remove a foreign object stuck in the eye.
- Seek immediate medical attention.

Chemical Burns:

- Immediately flush the eye with water or any drinkable liquid. Open the eye as wide as possible. Continue flushing for at least 15 minutes. For caustic or basic solutions, continue flushing while on the way to medical care.
- If a contact lens is in the eye, begin flushing over the lens immediately. Flushing may dislodge the lens.
- Seek immediate medical attention.

Workers experience eye injuries on the job for two major reasons:

- They were not wearing proper eye protection.
- They were wearing the wrong kind of protection for the job.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics survey of workers who suffered eye injuries revealed that nearly three out of five were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident. These workers most often reported that they believed protection was not required for the situation.

Another eye hazard is **Computer Vision Syndrome**, also referred to as Digital Eye Strain. It describes a group of eye and vision-related problems that result from prolonged computer, tablet, e-reader and cell phone use. The average American worker spends seven hours a day on the computer either in the office or working from home. To help alleviate digital eye strain, follow the **20/20/20** rule; take a 20-second break to view something 20 feet away every 20 minutes.

If you have questions or concerns about which personal protective equipment (PPE) provides the correct level of eye protection for the task you're doing, review the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) if you're using chemicals, or speak to your command's Ground Safety Manager/Officer.

The *20/20/20 To Prevent Digital Eye Strain* flyer can be downloaded at www.aoa.org.



Winter Weather and Safe Driving

By Edwin Ventura

Between October 2020 and January 2021, we lost 9 Marines and 8 Sailors to motor vehicle mishaps. In the many months and years before their mishaps, these 17 servicemembers attended several briefs (e.g., Back in the Saddle and pre-holiday) in one shape or form. Yet, they are no longer with us. My question to you is, will you allow yourself or your brothers and sisters to become part of these tragic statistics and discussed during next year's safety training? Every safety specialist hopes you practice safe driving and be the best possible example for your fellow Marines, Sailors, and family members.



According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), there were 36,096 fatalities and 2.74 million traffic injuries in the United States in 2019. The total number of fatalities is broken down into the following four categories: 3,142 were distracted drivers; 10,142 were alcohol-impaired drivers; 9,466 were unbelted drivers, passengers, or both; and 1,836 were fatalities resulting from winter weather driving. We tend to place a large amount of focus on the top 3 (distracted driving, impaired driving, and wearing seatbelts), but we do not spend a lot of time providing meaningful guidance on winter driving. Winter driving will be the focus of this article.

Driving safely in winter weather can be a challenge even for the most experienced drivers. Once you are "in it" there are many factors outside of the driver's control, especially once friction between the tire and the road is lost.

SO, what are your choices when it comes to driving during inclement weather?

- How about not doing it? You can stay home! Only go out, if necessary. Even if you believe you have the best vehicle for the weather and can drive well in bad weather, it's better to avoid taking unnecessary risks.
- If you must "Go," drive slowly and adjust your speed to account for low traction conditions.
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the accelerator pedal slowly can help you regain traction after a skid.
- Increase your following distance to 5 or 6 seconds. This will help increase your safety margin by providing a longer distance to stop, if you have to stop in a hurry.
- Don't stop if you can avoid it. Keep in mind that there's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling.

While on the go, always keep in mind the two basic ingredients to icy roads: freezing temperatures (32°F and below); and precipitation (snow, sleet, rain, drizzle, mist). Remember that bridges will always freeze before the roads. Whenever freezing temperatures and precipitation are present, slow down to 45 MPH or less and learn how to respond appropriately to a skid:

- Don't hit the brakes
- Turn into the skid
- Don't panic and overcorrect

Successfully negotiating your way out of a skid is a skill that is not easily acquired. It requires your understanding of the forces at play as well as when and how to apply the use of your vehicle's power train to help you recover. Please visit icyroadsafety.com for tips and training videos on this topic.



In addition to the safety tips above, ensure you keep up with your vehicle's maintenance by ensuring your fluids are up to levels; battery and lights are fully serviceable; and tires are of the proper type, inflation and have sufficient tread. In case of emergencies where you are stranded, maintain an emergency kit with winter essentials such as blankets, gloves, ice scraper, snow brush, flashlight, extra batteries, jumper cables, first-aid kit, bottled water, multi-tool (e.g., Leatherman or Swiss Army knife), road flares/reflective warning triangles, and any other items you deem necessary. You just never know what may happen on the road; therefore, properly assessing your situation and planning for contingencies will help you stay away from becoming an unfortunate statistic.

Emergency Preparedness Program

By Mike Duran

Most people do not think of emergency preparedness until a natural disaster strikes. Recent winter weather conditions in Texas exemplify the need to have a well thought out emergency preparedness policy, as the unexpected can occur anytime and anywhere. Do you know what your workplace emergency preparedness policies are and where they are posted?

According to the Director of Facilities at the National Safety Council (NSC), the policy should give employees a guideline on what to expect during severe weather events. The emergency preparedness policy should be flexible, describing general guidelines to observe, but allow the decision-making team to consider variables not included in the policy. The NSC states, “employees should feel empowered to use their best judgement in delaying or avoiding commuting when weather is extreme.” It is understandable that organizations still need to function, even when Mother Nature isn’t cooperating; however, employee safety should always come first. As stated by the NSC, “the policy should be tailored to allow the organization to meet its business needs and purpose.” Before the severe weather arrives, supervisors should coordinate with employees.

At the very least your emergency preparedness policy should include the following severe weather events:

Flooding: During 2017, 182 people died according to [National Weather Service](#). Rainfall, melting snow, coastal storms, dams and water system overflows can lead to flooding. Floodwater can, in turn, cause power outages, disrupt transportation and damage buildings. If you live or work where flooding is a risk, identify a safe location to shelter yourself from danger. If ordered to evacuate: obey evacuation orders; never drive around barricades or through floodwaters; if trapped in a building with rising water go to the highest level; and avoid possible electrocution by never touching electrical equipment, if you’re standing in water.

Tornadoes: Spring is considered tornado season, but tornadoes can occur any time of the year. About 1,200 strike each year and according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, tornadoes have resulted in an average of 70 fatalities per year from 1987 to 2016. Keep employees informed about weather conditions utilizing text messages, e-mails or announcements over an intercom or loudspeaker; make sure employees know where to seek shelter and assemble after a tornado passes.

Earthquakes: While not limited to a particular season, they can occur anywhere; and therefore, the threat should never be dismissed. Hazards that employees may encounter during and after an earthquake include being struck by building structural components; furnishings or improperly stored materials; being burned by fires resulting from gas leaks or electrical shorts; and being exposed to released chemicals. In the event of an earthquake, ensure employees have a designated safe place such as under a sturdy table or desk, or against an interior wall away from windows. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, “injury statistics show that people moving as little as 10 feet during an earthquake’s shaking are most likely to be injured.” Keep the distance an employee has to move as short as possible. After an earthquake, workers should stay in their safe place until the shaking stops and remain alert for potential aftershocks. Additionally, use the stairs instead of elevators; and, if they’re outside when the earthquake begins, **stay outside**, crouch down and cover their heads.

As with any emergency, having a thorough plan established can mitigate injuries, fatalities and damage to property. Just having an emergency preparedness policy alone is not sufficient to ensure the safety of your employees, you must review and practice the plan at least once per year.

