



Chemical or Toxin: **RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL
RELEASE**

Sources: Washington Military Department
Emergency Management Division
www.emd.wa.gov
Washington State Department of Health
www.doh.wa.gov
The United State Armed Forces Nuclear, Biological
and Chemical Survival Manual (June 2003)

One possible source of radiation exposure is a “dirty bomb.” A dirty bomb is a small explosive device packaged with radioactive materials and does not occur with nuclear detonation. The explosion of this type of bomb is more dangerous than the radioactive materials it might spread. The primary damage caused by a dirty bomb would be psychological and economical. During any event that releases radiation, your best protection is to follow the recommendations of local authorities.

STAY INSIDE

Stay inside your home or office unless instructed by authorities to leave. Close the windows and turn off vents, fans, heating or air-conditioning, and stay near the center of the building. Once the initial blast is over, radioactive materials can be spread in the smoke and debris in the air. By staying inside you will reduce any potential exposure to airborne radioactive material. If there is a basement, go there.

LISTEN TO THE RADIO

When you learn that radioactive materials have been released in an area near you, tune your radio to a local AM station for emergency broadcasting instructions. Government agencies will let you know how to protect yourself. Keep a battery-powered radio handy in case electrical power goes out in your area.

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS

The best way to avoid exposure to radiation is to do what experts advise! If told to evacuate, do so promptly. Take items you will need for an extended absence, such as prescription medicines and clothing. Listen for news about the location of the radioactive cloud. Even if it has already passed, radioactive contamination may have fallen on the ground and experts will recommend the best ways to safely leave the area.

IF YOU SUSPECT YOU ARE CONTAMINATED

If you believe you have been exposed to radioactive materials, you should carefully remove your outer layer of clothing and put it in a plastic bag; then take a warm shower to rinse off any radioactive materials. Place the sealed bag in a room away from people.

SEEK HELP IF NEEDED

Special assistance centers will be set up as soon as possible. If you were near the explosion or believe you were in the path of the cloud, tell the staff at the assistance center.

WATCH WHAT YOU EAT

You may have to avoid drinking fresh milk or eating fruits and vegetables grown in the affected area. Wait until the state or local health department announces that produce and dairy products are safe to eat and drink. Milk, fruit and vegetables are okay to eat if they were bought or picked before the radiation was released and were stored indoors. Food stored in cans or bags is also safe to eat. Be sure to thoroughly rinse off containers before opening.

