10 ‘Must Knows’ To Survive A Gunshot Wound

In a time of social unrest and the general breaking down of society as a whole, the risks of getting shot are bound to increase.

Is it possible to survive being shot? Sometimes yes and sometimes no. Whether or not you survive the shooting will be determined by a number of factors.

Even though you may have no control over these factors, it may still help to get some ideas about what you are up against so that you can figure out what kinds of chances you are willing to take when it comes to interacting with others in a time of social collapse.

The Caliber or Gauge of the Ammo

Projectile weight and rate of speed are major determinants of whether you will live or die from a gunshot wound. You can estimate the speed a bullet will travel by the amount of gunpowder it has propelling it and the amount of weight the projectile itself has.

At first glance, if you look at projectile size, it would seem that smaller bullets will be more likely to injure than kill. The design of the casing, type of powder used, and size of the primer will determine how fast the projectile moves. If the projectile is small and moves fast, it can deliver a lethal impact.

On the other hand, if the projectile is larger and moves slower, it may not be lethal. Large size projectiles that move relatively fast are also considered lethal.

With shotgun ammo, you must consider where and how multiple projectiles will hit the target. Distance from the target, velocity of travel also play a key role in determining whether or not you will survive being shot with this kind of ammo.

The Design of the Bullet

The design of the bullet if it moves fast enough, will heat up because of friction between the bullet and the air it is moving through. As a result, higher velocity bullets require a metal jacket that will prevent the bullet from being damaged because of the heat or the initial acceleration.

On the other hand, lower velocity bullets, such as FMJ or full metal jacket ammo for handguns do far less damage because of the jacket. Other bullets also have special jackets that enable the projectile to expand or break apart in order to do more damage on impact.

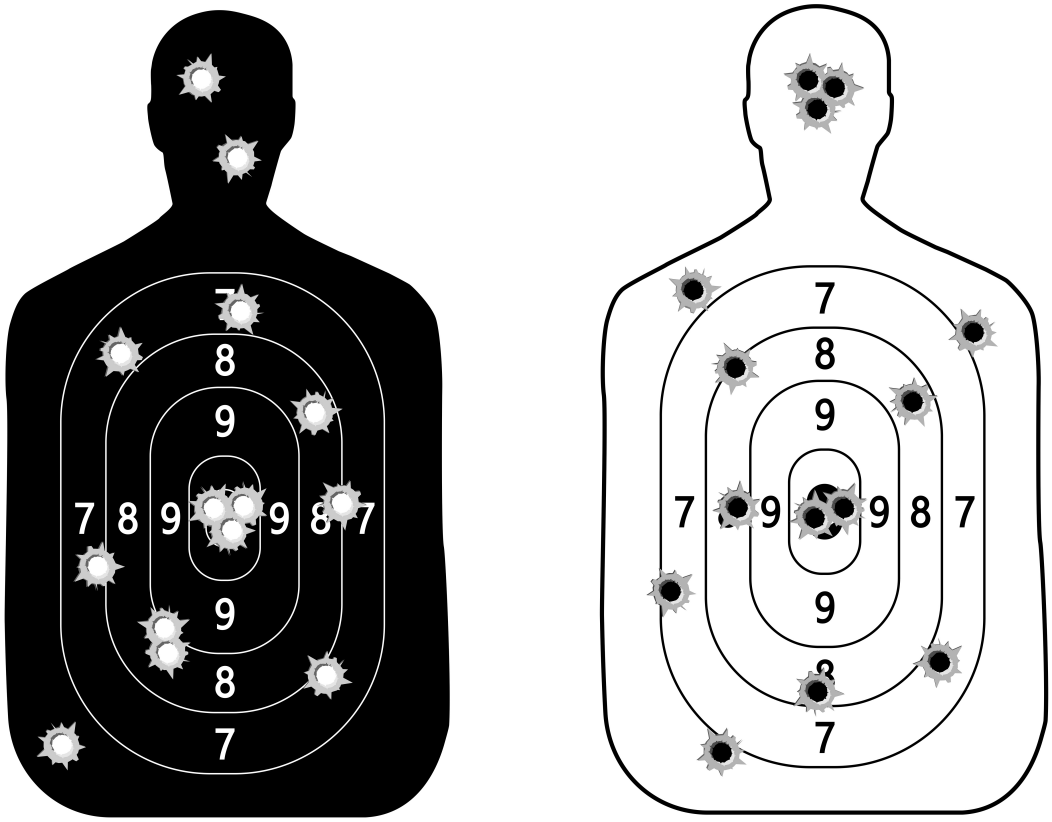
When it comes to bullet design and the degree of damage it can do upon hitting a target, there is a balance that must be achieved between the design and speed at which the bullet moves. In some cases, the shape of the bullet combined with a high velocity may create a bullet that does less harm than expected because the bullet will pass through the target instead of lodge in it or expand.

Shot Placement: The Critical Determinant in a Lethal Shooting

For the purpose of this article, I am expanding the definition of shot placement to include the distance between the gun and target as well as where the bullet actually hits the target.

Despite all the uninformed opinions out there, a bullet in an area such as the hand or foot is not likely to be lethal regardless of the gun you shoot it from, how fast the gun

shoots, the number of bullets in the magazine, or the ammo type. It does not matter if you are shooting with an AR-15 or a derringer.



By the same token, it also does not matter what kind of gun or the ammo you are using if the bullet hits the right part of a major organ. Under the right circumstances, any bullet can kill or not kill based on shot placement alone.

Ballistic Vests and Gear

One of the best ways to survive being shot by a handgun or a shotgun is to be wearing body armor. Body armor comes in different levels of protection from level 1 to 4. The higher the number, the better the vest will be at preventing the bullet from hitting your body.

A threat level 3A wrap around vest with either steel plates or ceramic tiles would offer the best protection against most

ammo on the market these days. Some of the newer polymer or composite materials are also making it easier to produce lighter weight vests and other gear that can be useful.

To protect from high power rifles or assault rifles (as in machine guns) the vest would have to be covered with over lapping steel plates or ceramic tiles.

Unfortunately, this kind of gear is incredibly heavy, hot, and very impractical to wear. Your freedom of movement would be greatly impaired just like the armored knights of old.

Today, many people running around buying ballistic back packs, vests, and other gear do not understand that these items only stop the bullet. They do not stop the force behind the bullet. Instead, the bullet's energy is transferred directly to the individual wearing it, and acts much like the forces that cause injury and death in a car accident.

Even through the bullets never entered the wearer's body, there will still be impact internal injuries, broken bones, and outer skin cuts/bruising. In most cases the victim will survive, but will be in a lot of pain.

A Comparison of High And Low Velocity Bullet Wounds

Both high velocity and low velocity bullets can cause a lot of tissue damage to the human body. Most military style bullets are designed to stay intact after they impact. But this isn't the case with hunting or self defense bullets.

They have the tendency to break up or fragment inside of the body, which causes a great deal of pain and suffering.

Low velocity bullet wounds can be easier to treat because the bullet doesn't suck debris from outside the body into the wound as it passes through the tissue. That being said, if the

bullet impacts bones and breaks them, or hits a major blood vessel or critical part of an organ, repairing the injury will be more challenging.

High velocity bullet wounds can be more dangerous because of the problems caused by debris from outside the body being deposited in the body and the exit wound. The debris can cause anaerobic infections, tetanus, and gaseous gangrene.

The shooting victim may have survived the initial shooting, but may pass away from infections caused by the bullet or the debris.

Gunshot Wound Characteristics and Likelihood of Survival

No matter whether a bullet wound proves to be lethal or not, the location of the injury plays a significant role in the outcome. As you can see from the list below, different types of tissue may also respond differently to the bullet.

Head Injuries

Even though most gunshots to the head are fatal, some people survive even if the bullet hits part of the brain. For survivors, the biggest problem is usually traumatic brain injury and its impact on the survivor’s quality of life.

Depending on how the bullet enters the skull, the force behind the projectile can interact with the opposite side of the skull and increase the amount of damage to brain tissue that does not come into contact with the bullet.

If the individual is shot in the face, there can be severe damage to the nose, eyes, mouth, or spinal cord. Damage to any of these areas can be fatal or non-fatal depending on which area is damaged and how bad.

Neck Injuries

If an individual is shot in the neck, there is a chance of spinal injuries or damage to veins or arteries. Even if spinal injuries do not lead to death, they can cause permanent paralysis as a quad or a paraplegic.

Damage to arteries or veins in the neck can cause severe blood loss. If you do survive this kind of injury, there is a chance of brain damage because of insufficient oxygen reaching the brain.

Heart and Lungs

Depending on the damage to these organs it can be lethal. If the heart is severely damaged it is possible for the individual to bleed out and die. If there is minor damage to the heart and lungs it is still possible to survive if you can get quick medical attention.

It should be noted that wearing a bullet proof vest is no guarantee that you will survive a gunshot to these areas. For example, if the bullet is heavy enough, and lands over the heart, the force or pressure can literally cause the heart to burst.

Stomach, intestines, liver, spleen, or kidneys

Any heavy damage to these areas by bullets can be fatal or at the very least, cause critical damage. In many cases, bullets striking these organs will cause ripping and tearing like injuries. If the wounds do not directly lead to death, secondary infections may prove deadly.

Typically, perforations of the large intestine are the most dangerous insofar as infections because the open wounds may become contaminated with fecal materials.

Arms and legs

Most gunshot injuries are not fatal to the arms or legs unless the bullet tears and rips the veins or arteries apart to cause severe blood loss. Most non-fatal injuries to the limbs include broken bones, nerve damage, or tendon damage.

The Physical And Mental Status Of The Victim

If an individual is in excellent physical and mental condition, there is an increased chance of surviving unless it is a true lethal kill shot. To survive a non-lethal shooting you must never give in to the idea that you are going to die.

To keep you on the right track in the aftermath of being shot, remember the ones you love, an focus your strength on the will to survive. If this doesn’t work for you, hate and revenge are also good reasons to fight to stay alive.

Never underestimate the will of a shooting victim that will do anything it takes to live and get even with the person who shot them.

Amount of Time Between the Shooting and Obtaining Medical Help

When it comes to being shot there are critical time limits that determine if you will live or die. If it was a lethal shot that damaged a vital organ, vein, or artery, death can occur in a matter of minutes from extreme blood loss.

If it was a non-lethal shot, the bleeding can still be excessive enough to cause death. This is why your first response to being shot should be to stop or slow up the bleeding as quickly as possible. Use tourniquets, direct

pressure over the wound, or anything else you can think of to stop the bleeding. Never try to remove the bullet on your own as this can start the bleeding all over again.

How Many Times Was The Victim Shot

In the case of a shooting victim being shot multiple times, there is a chance one or more bullets will hit a vital organ. On the other hand, even if all the bullets have a non-lethal placement, the victim can still bleed out because of all the body damage.

Type of Ground The Victim Fall's On

The type of ground a person lands on after being shot can have an effect on whether the victim lives or dies, even if the bullet wounds were non-lethal in nature.

- If the shooting victim with non-lethal injuries ends up on dry dirt, rocks, grass, low growing vines, or woodlands there is a good chance that they will survive because there is a reduced risk of secondary infection from these sources.
- If the shooting victim fell into a somewhat shallow body of water (either fresh or saltwater) the risk of a secondary infection is high. It does not matter if the original shots were non-fatal or if the water was clean or polluted.
- If the shooting victim falls into deep water either polluted or semi-clean, there is a good chance the victim will drown before rescue. Basically, in this case, water will flow into the wound and increase the body weight causing the body to sink quicker. Needless to say, water entering bullet holes in the lungs or throat will cause death fairly quickly.

As traumatic as being shot can be, it is entirely possible to

survive the shooting and the aftermath.

While many factors are out of your control, you can still set your mind and focus on being determined to survive. You may also want to consider learning more about body armor and other devices that have some kind of ballistic shielding in them.

It is also very important to always be aware of your surroundings and make sure you know what to do if you suspect that someone is about to open fire nearby. As with many other types of injury, being able to avoid being hit by bullets in the first place is the best way to survive a shooting incident.

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