

Prepping For Seniors: First Aid And Safety Tips You Need To Know

Being weak, small or old is not necessarily a weakness in a disaster situation if you have enough knowledge, skills and the proper mindset to survive.

Skills and knowledge take time to acquire, and so is the mindset that makes you strong and able to survive when the world around you is falling apart. Knowledge is a supply that you can carry with you freely. It doesn't weight anything and it can't be stolen. If you want to stay safe, you need to know how to stay healthy and deter those people who think you're too weak to protect yourself.

Read this article for a bunch of helpful tips that will help you stay safe and sound in time of need!

7 First Aid Survival Tips for Seniors

Knowing how to recognize and treat common sicknesses and injuries is a skill that any prepper should master. Being a senior might make the things worse, as rapid treatment could make the difference between life and death.

Chances are good that many people won't know symptoms or have any supplies to treat injuries, so you can potentially save lives just by using what you know and what you have in your first aid kit. Here are a few tips that may help.

Have a First Aid Manual

First aid manuals are full of how-to's, pictures, and lists of

symptoms for common ailments such as dehydration or infection. Having a manual to refer to can help keep things clear in your head or help you identify maladies faster than you normally would.

Carry one with you in your survival kit and in your bug-out bag. While you're at it, toss in a book of homeopathic remedies and edible medicinal herbs.

Take a First Aid/CPR Class

These are often offered for free at your local emergency services offices or home extension offices. They teach you how to treat a variety of injuries and ailments including cuts, burns, breaks, dehydration, infection, punctures and eye injuries. Encourage your friends and family to take the course with you.

CPR may be a separate class but is well worth your time. You'll learn how to revive somebody who isn't breathing and/or doesn't have a heartbeat. Even if you can't revive them, keeping oxygen flowing to their brain will help them survive without brain damage until you can get them to a hospital.

Have Emergency Contact Cards or Bracelets

These can be as simple as index cards that you keep in your wallet. Bracelets can be made at local pet stores that you can wear on a bracelet. List your name, emergency contact info, medical conditions, allergies, and medications.

Numbers and medication names can be difficult to remember if you're injured or even scared, so having them written down may save your life or the life of a loved one.

Keep Your Emergency First Aid Kit Stocked

We've already discussed [what you should have in your kit](#) but make sure that everybody in the house knows that it's for

emergencies only.

It won't do you any good in a SHTF situation if somebody robs all of the band aids and hearing aid batteries out of it instead of getting those from the regular household supply.

Keep Tabs on Local Weather Events

If you've lived in an area all of your life, you likely know what types of severe weather events to expect. Know the difference between storm watches (weather patterns are such that a storm may form) and storm warnings (an event has already formed and is on the way).

If you're traveling, educate yourself on the types of weather events that you may encounter in vacationland. Check their local weather before you leave so that you'll know what to expect and can be prepared regardless of where you're at.

Be Tech-Savvy

In a time of emergency, text messaging and data services such as internet connections may be more reliable than traditional phone calls. If you know how to use these services, you may be more apt to have a means of communication than if you're relying on a phone line.

Stay Hydrated

Your body loses water through breathing, sweating, urinating and defecating. If you don't replace this water regularly (2-3 liters per day), you'll die quickly. Knowing the signs of dehydration are crucial so that you can recognize it in yourself or in others. They are:

- Dark colored urine with a strong "pee" smell
- Not urinating as often as usual
- Fatigue
- Brain fog

- Dark or sunken eyes
- Your skin doesn't "snap back" when you pinch your arm
- Mood swings
- Slow capillary refill – when you squeeze down on your fingernail, the white should go away immediately when you release it. If not, drink!
- Being thirsty. This may seem like a no-brainer, but if you're feeling thirst, you're already dehydrated.
- Decrease in sweating
- Swollen or shriveled tongue

It's also imperative that you maintain adequate nutrition because your body requires minerals and vitamins to properly absorb water, maintain healthy blood pressure and just survive.

Self-Defense for Seniors

When it comes to defending yourself, you have a couple of advantages that may make up for your slightly slower reflexes. First, the older you are, the more an attacker is going to underestimate you. They going to be more likely to assume that you're an easy mark just because you're older or perhaps physically challenged.

Second, they're going to expect you to be afraid. If you don't show fear, it's possible that you can throw them off-kilter long enough to buy yourself a few extra, precious seconds.

There are a few things that you can do to make this time count.

Take a Martial Arts Class

Though this may sound silly to you, the health benefits of martial arts are out of this world. It helps prevent muscle atrophy and bone loss and it keeps your connective tissues healthy. It also has the added benefit of giving you some

extra skills that you can use to defend yourself if SHTF.

No matter what your fitness level is or what your physical abilities are, there are martial arts classes designed to meet your needs. The secret is to find a good trainer, and if there isn't a senior's martial arts class in your area, talk to a sensei about starting one. If you're interested, most likely other seniors in your area are, too!

A huge advantage to a senior's martial arts or self-defense class is that you'll meet other seniors interested in learning to defend themselves. It's likely that some of them will be doing it for the same reason that you are – prepping for SHTF.

Put out some feelers and you may just find some valuable allies that will be willing to join forces with you. That can be invaluable.

Learn to Use Your Brain as a Weapon

If your home is invaded in a survival situation, it may be more pertinent to use your head rather than your fists to defend yourself until you can gain the upper hand. For instance, trick the person into believing that you're weaker than you really are.

Find non-traditional weapons that are handy such as your cane, a lamp, or even an ashtray. Make your first attempt count because you may not get another shot.

Offer to get your “money” from your purse and [reach for you weapon instead](#). Don't bother pulling it out; a gun will fire just fine though the bottom of your bag.

Consider Buying Non-Traditional Weapons

In addition to your standard guns, there are common items that have now been weaponized to help older people level the playing field. There are stun canes that look like a regular

cane but actually have stun-gun capabilities when engaged. There are cell phones like that, too.

Just about anything can be used as a weapon. Canned food, keys, a pen, lamps, rocks; really whatever you can get your hands on will be better than nothing but again, make your first move count by aiming for the throat, nose, head, groin or eyes if possible.

Carry your standard weapon, too. Pepper spray or your gun won't do you any good if they're in the upstairs drawer. It's time to survive so be ready at all times.

Bring as Little Attention to Your Place as Possible

If your place is already boarded up and unattractive-looking, don't bring any more attention to the fact that you're there than necessary. Make trips outside during times that nobody is likely to see you.

If you can, build a path that's blocked from public view in advance. Using shrubbery or fencing will allow you a greater amount of privacy to come and go on your property undetected.

If you're cooking with wood, try to use your stove before dawn and after dusk, times when the smoke is less likely to be seen.

Plan in Advance

The worst time to figure out how you're going to respond in any given situation is when you're actually in that situation.

Have an action plan based upon numerous scenarios and practice what to do in each situation. By doing this, you'll identify possible holes in your plan and you'll also be prepared to act instead of react when faced with the real-life problem.

Sometimes the best self-defense is to back down and escape. It's OK to run if you need to; if you're faced with certain death or the need to leave your home, by all means, leave! If evacuation is part of your plan, you may want to hide a stockpile away from your home in a place such as a storage unit.

Also, pack a bug-out bag with all of the necessary supplies that you'll need to get you to your bug-out location.

Take a Weapons Course or Join a Shooting Club

Knowing how to use your weapon is one thing but being comfortable with it is another. Taking a weapons course is a great way to safely learn how your gun works and how best to use it. You'll also learn its shortcomings, which is just as important as knowing its strengths.

Joining a local shooting club has a few advantages. First, the more you load and fire your gun, the more comfortable you'll be with it when it comes time to defend yourself. Gun clubs are also [great places to meet like-minded people](#).

If you're interested in being part of a community prepping network, chances are good that you'll meet fellow preppers at a gun club. Just cautiously feel around. If nothing else, you might make some friends.

There are many ways to learn how to defend yourself but the most important thing to remember is that you need to stick to the plan of attack (or escape) once you've committed to it. Train your skills and use your age as an advantage to stay safe!

*This article has been written by **Theresa Crouse** for Survivopedia.*