



Responder Safety and Health

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Objectives

After completing this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least five potential hazards they might encounter during an MRC deployment;
- Describe methods to mitigate each of those hazards.

Before You Go

Consider the following:

- What's your assignment?
- What resources do you have to do your task(s)?
- What do you need?
- What hazards might you encounter?
- How might you mitigate those hazards?

Potential Hazards

- Hazardous materials
- Electricity (power lines, lightning, etc.)
- Fire
- Debris (building collapse, etc.)
- Machinery
- Weather
- Disease
- Violence

Personal Protection

- Eyes
- Ears
- Skin
- Environmental
- Food and Water

Upon Arrival

Personal safety:

- Who are you working with (staff and patients)
- Locate exits and safety zones
- Maintain situational awareness
- What is the address?

Don't ever hesitate to call 911

Stress Management

Before taking an assignment:

- Personal wellness
- Exercise and relaxation
- Disease prevention
- Balancing work, family and health

Stress Management

Part of situational awareness includes knowing what the situation is doing to you and your coworkers:

- Check on your coworkers regularly.
- It's okay to admit you're struggling.

Warning Signs

- Irritability toward coworkers, family and friends
- Inability to concentrate
- Difficulty sleeping, increased sleeping, or nightmares
- Feelings of sadness, anxiety, guilt or hopelessness
- Indecisiveness

Warning Signs (Cont.)

- Loss of appetite (gastrointestinal disturbances)
- Loss of interest in sexual activities
- Isolation
- Loss of interest in work
- Increased use of alcohol

Warning Signs (Cont.)

- Recreational drug use
- Physical symptoms such as chronic pain (headache, backache)

Stress Management

- Minimize or eliminate stressors
- Change partners to avoid negative or hostile personality
- Change work hours
- Don't obsess over frustrations: focus on doing a good job
- Talk about your feelings with people you trust
- Seek professional counseling if needed

Stress Management

Minimize physical response to stress:

- A deep breath to settle an anger response
- Periodic stretching
- Slow, deep breathing
- Regular physical exercise
- Progressive muscle relaxation and/or meditation

Grieving Process

- Denial
- Anger, Hostility
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

Concerns of Ill, Injured or Dying Patients

- Anxiety
- Pain and fear
- Anger and Hostility
- Depression
- Dependency
- Guilt
- Mental health problems
- Receiving unrelated bad news

Care For Critical Patients

- Avoid sad and grim comments
- Orient the patient
- Be honest
- Respond to initial refusal of care
- Allow for hope