

# OH SHIT we're gonna get sprayed!

surviving  
chemical weapons  
at protests

2020

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## #1 Protester fashion chic

**Eyes:** silicone-lined swim goggles rock. (Shatterproof and prescription goggles exist.) NO CONTACTS!

**Nose/mouth:** Cloth masks help a tiny bit with chems, a lot with COVID. Bring a spare in a sealed baggie, just in case! Respirators can be effective if fitted, but also scare the crowd and draw attention.

**Skin:** oil based products can trap chems... but pepper spray on sunburn hurts more!

**Fabric:** Synthetics and rain gear protect best, but chems can melt some fabrics. Lots of protesters wear cheap and used clothes. Trash bag ponchos rock!

## #2 Comrades who might need extra support:

**Asthma:** if you've ever needed a rescue inhaler, bring one along! *Look for quiet comrades who can't breathe!*

**Pregnancy:** tear gas is suspected to cause miscarriages

**Contact lenses:** contacts trap chems and get in the way of an eye flush

**Children, elders, very ill folks:** pain and contamination are harder for bodies that are already going through a lot

**Allergies:** lots of ingredients, lots of potential for an allergic reaction

**The #1 tactic of shithheads is fear.**  
They want us afraid of them, each other, ourselves. Then they can herd us wherever they want us to go.  
**The best way to fight back is by spreading calm.**

Walk, don't run.  
Don't spread rumors.  
Be kind to each other.  
Be kind to yourself.

**This pain is temporary  
and we are strong.**

## #3 What are chemical weapons?

Both tear gas and pepper spray are "less lethal" particulates (little droplets of yuck) that cause burning pain. Shitheads use them to scare us-- to break up our crowds, to make us panic and run away.

Tear gas is used by the State to make big crowds move. A direct hit makes it hard to breathe, triggers coughing and nausea, and can hurt eyes/nose/mouth.

Pepper spray is used by any shithead who feels like it. It can be aimed at just a few people, or a big crowd. A direct hit causes burning pain to eyes/nose/mouth, and can make it hard to breathe.

Treatment for both is getting out of the cloud, and maybe an eye flush.

- You're contaminated till you clean up!  
- Be mindful of where you go and who/what you touch.  
- Swish and spit water. Rinse your skin.  
- As soon as you can, take a shower with strong soap. (Cool water keeps pores closed.)  
- Seal up all the gross fabric in trash bags. Wash it later with strong soap, line dry; repeat a few times!  
- Try to avoid extra kidney and liver toxins (alcohol, drugs, etc.) for a few days, while your body is processing all this gross stuff.  
- If you want herbal aftercare, ask your local herbalist or street medic!

**- Be kind to yourself! <3**

## #5 Myths & rumors

Lots of things *won't* help! Here's the funniest ones we've heard lately:

- ★ Burning tires
- ★ Applying ketchup or mustard
- ★ Howling at the moon

**What else won't help? Doodle it!**

## #4 What's an eye flush like?

With a direct hit, it'll be hard to open your eyes and see right away. Comrades should help you get out of the area safely.

Someone offering an eye flush should introduce themselves, get consent to treat you, and tell you what they're doing each step of the way.

The only treatment we recommend is a **forceful stream of water** to push the pepper spray out of your eyes. It won't work if you have contact lenses in, so please try to take them out **beforehand!**

*Even with no treatment, symptoms should fade within an hour. This pain is temporary, and we are strong!*

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Part 2: How to do an eye flush!  
Zines are no substitute for hands-on training!  
Ask local street medics if you want to learn more and practice these skills..♡

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## #2 What can you do?

Don't just help the first person who yells! Take a second to look around for “silent patients” on the ground, help them first. *CALL FOR MEDICS! We're here to help.*

Say hi, get consent. **“Hey, I’m Frida. I know how to flush eyes. Can I help you? Great! Can I grab your arm and lead you out of here?”**

Both tear gas and pepper spray are helped by getting out of the cloud of yuck. Water eye flushes really help with direct hits of pepper spray-- they don't help as much with tear gas, but it won't hurt someone who's been tear gassed to get an eye flush with water.

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## #3 Flushing pepper sprayed eyes

This zine only teaches one protocol: flushing eyes with a forceful stream of **clean water.** (See pg 6 for why!)

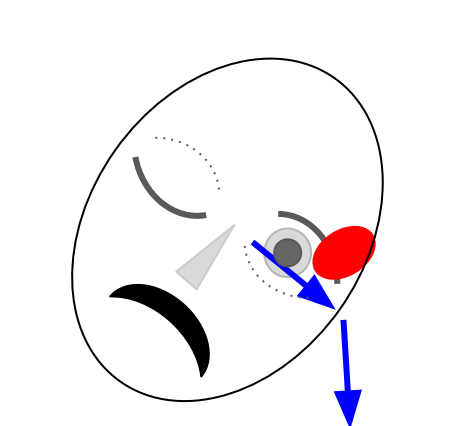
1. Get to a safer spot. Put on gloves! *(Everyone is safer this way: you, them, whomever you touch next.)*
2. Contacts out, or it won't work.
3. Talk through what's coming next.
4. Tilt head sideways, get consent to **hold their eyelid open. →**
5. **Use a strong squirt of clean water from the “nose side” of lower eye to the “ear side” to push the gross stuff out and onto the ground. →**
6. Repeat a few times on each eye!

**#6 Why doesn't this zine suggest for treatment???**

- Water is safe, effective, & cheap! We know it works!
- A forceful stream of water flushes the chems out. Everything else is only more effective if we want a chemical reaction in the eyeball!
- All milky white treatments stain protesters until they can clean up, which is extra obvious on folks with darker skin and/or clothes.
- Lots of recommended treatments aren't safe. Cow milk spoils and some folks are allergic. Maalox has alcohol in it. All abrasive substances can scratch the eye.

**JUST USE WATER!**

## #4 Eye flush diagram



*Symptoms should fade within an hour after getting out of exposure, even with no treatment.*

**#5 Comrades who might need extra support:**

- **Asthma:** chems can trigger asthma attacks, and not breathing can kill. *Look out for quiet comrades who can't breathe!*
- **Pregnancy:** it's suspected that tear gas may cause miscarriages
- **Contact lenses:** contacts trap chems and get in the way of an eye flush
- **Children, elders, very ill folks:** pain and contamination are harder for bodies that are already going through a lot
- **Allergies:** lots of ingredients, lots of potential for an allergic reaction