

Education and Training Opportunities

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Introduction

In the new realm of unconventional terrorist threats, the clinician's understanding and recognition of chemical, biological, and radioactive agent exposure is critical to identifying an incident, as well as initiating medical intervention. Few health professionals, however, are trained to recognize the signs of unconventional weapon exposure and to know the appropriate treatment strategies for radiological, biological, or chemical casualties. Health professionals need to be familiar with such threats, as well as with conventional emergency medical response requirements. As part of the first line of local response, they may be required to perform independently for many hours after an attack until outside resources are mobilized and available for consultation and assistance.

As part of a larger emergency response, it is important that health professionals understand how their activities integrate into the total scene. Understanding one's role in the complex response process is as important as providing hands-on intervention. In large-scale mass casualty events, physicians and other health care workers must be knowledgeable of the need for efficient coordination among local, state, and federal emergency response efforts; how to protect themselves and others from further harm; how to communicate effectively with other emergency personnel and the media; and how to address the unique psychological effects and related social chaos that may ensue.

Extensive training materials and programs have been developed to help physicians and others prepare for and respond to terrorism and other public health emergencies. Training is available in multiple formats either on-site or through distance learning to meet diverse training needs. In December 2002, the American Medical Association (AMA) established the Center for Public Health Preparedness and Disaster Response to develop and disseminate a comprehensive disaster management education and training program for physicians and other health professionals. The following year, in partnership with four major medical centers and three national health organizations, the AMA established the National Disaster Life Support™ (NDLS™) training program to better prepare health care professionals and emergency response personnel for mass casualty events. The overarching goal is to standardize emergency response training nationwide and strengthen our nation's public health system. By completing this and other programs listed in this section, clinicians will better understand their integrated roles in the broader disaster response system.

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Selected Courses and Training Programs

American Academy of Clinical Toxicology (AACT)

[Advanced Hazmat Life Support](#)

The AACT sponsors an international program, Advanced Hazmat Life Support (AHLS), with the University of Arizona Emergency Medicine Research Center to educate paramedics, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, industrial hygienists, and others regarding toxicological care for victims of hazmat incidents. The 16-hour, 2-day course enables participants to:

- Demonstrate rapid assessment of hazmat patients
- Recognize toxic syndromes (toxidromes)
- Demonstrate the ability to medically manage hazmat incidents
- Apply the poisoning treatment paradigm
- Identify and administer specific antidotes

American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT)

[Chemical Agents of Opportunity for Terrorism: The Medical and Psychological Consequences of TICs \(Toxic Industrial Chemicals\) and TIMS \(Toxic Industrial Materials\)](#)

This 1-day course provides awareness-level training on a variety of toxic syndromes likely to be encountered following exposures to TICs and TIMs and other chemical agents of opportunity. The course focuses on the medical and psychological issues pertaining to TICs, TIMs, and other important non-volatile chemical exposures.

American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)

[Physician Preparedness for Acts of Water Terrorism](#)

An online CME program sponsored by the ACPM for practicing health care professionals, who will most likely be the first to observe unusual illness patterns and must understand their critical role as “front-line responders” in detecting water-related disease resulting from biological, chemical or radiological terrorism. The primary purpose of the guide is to address this critical need and provide health care professionals with streamlined access to resources that will help guide them through the recognition, management, and prevention of water-related disease resulting from intentional acts of water terrorism.

American Medical Association (AMA)

[National Disaster Life Support™ Program](#)

The AMA, in collaboration with four academic centers and three national associations, developed the National Disaster Life Support™ (NDLS™) program to coordinate efforts and resources of the AMA and others to enhance the education and training of health care professionals and others in disaster preparedness and emergency response. Three courses, Basic Disaster Life Support™ (BDLS®), Advanced Disaster Life Support™ (ADLS®), and Core Disaster Life Support® (CDLS®), evolved from this collaboration. The AMA is the sponsoring and CME-accrediting organization for the courses.

American Red Cross

[Emergency First Aid and Basic Life Support Courses](#)

The Red Cross offers first aid, CPR, and automated external defibrillator (AED) programs for any age, tailored to the needs of specific groups and individuals

Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI)

[Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation \(MEIR\)](#)

The MEIR course, offered at the post-graduate level, is designed to improve the operational capabilities of the military services by providing medical and operational personnel with up-to-date information concerning the biomedical consequences of radiation exposure, how the effects can be reduced, and the medical management of casualties. Classroom training is available at regularly scheduled locations.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

[Bioterrorism and Emergency Preparedness Training Resource Page](#)

Archive of education and training materials in multiple formats on various aspects of bioterrorism

[Centers for Public Health Preparedness](#)

The CDC Centers for Public Health Preparedness are based at academic medical centers and schools of public health. Together they are a national resource for public health emergency preparedness education and training on:

- bioterrorism
- infectious disease outbreaks such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)
- other health emergencies

[Medical Response to Nuclear and Radiological Terrorism](#)

Archive of a February 10, 2004, CDC broadcast to provide clinicians with the most current information on the following topics: possible radiological scenarios, basic information on radiation and protection for clinicians, medical management of victims of a radiological incident, and decontamination and treatment of victims.

[Plague Training Module](#)

Web-based module designed to teach the natural epidemiology of plague and how to manage it as both a natural disease and an intentional attack; content is presented in a series of eight lessons.

[Public Health Training Network \(PHTN\)](#)

The PHTN is a distance learning system that uses a variety of instructional media ranging from print-based to videotape and multimedia to meet the training needs of the public health workforce nationwide. [Course catalog](#).

Saint Louis University School of Public Health, Center for the Study of Bioterrorism

[Chemical Terrorism – Primary Care Preparedness](#)

A series of 15 lectures with reference documents, aimed at primary care physicians, about the Federal Bureau of Investigation “Top Ten List” of chemical terrorism threats, as well as several classical chemical warfare agents. This program includes an overview lecture and individual agent lectures on toxicity, protective equipment, detection, decontamination, signs and symptoms, treatment, long-term medical and environmental sequelae. CME credits are offered for the program.

[Role of the Infection Control Professional in Bioterrorism Preparedness](#)

Provides a detailed lecture on the emergency management model, preparedness in workforce training and planning, response, and lessons learned.

Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center (EMRTC), New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMIMT)

[Weapons of Mass Destruction Training](#)

Offers live explosives training including the use of field exercises and classroom instruction. NMIMT is the lead National Disaster Preparedness Center (NDPC) partner for explosives and firearms, live explosives, and incendiary devices training. Two 32-hour operational-level courses are offered, [Incident Response to Terrorist Bombing](#) (IRTB) and [Prevention and Response to Suicide Bombing Incidents](#) (PRSBI), which combine:

- Classroom presentations
- Field laboratories
- Scenario-based exercises
- Case studies

A 4-hour [awareness level IRTB](#) course also is available.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA's [Emergency Management Institute](#) (EMI) provides a nationwide training program of courses to enhance U.S. emergency management practices. EMI instruction focuses on the four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, and covers areas such as natural hazards (earthquakes, hurricanes, floods), man-made hazards (terrorism, hazardous materials, radiological emergency preparedness). It also includes professional development, leadership, instructional methodology, exercise design, and public information. All EMI training is developed in partnership with state and local emergency management agencies. In addition to classroom courses, FEMA offers numerous [independent study courses](#) on emergency preparedness including:

- [Emergency Response to Terrorism Self-Study Manual](#)
- [IS 3 – Radiological Emergency Management](#)
- [IS 7 – A Citizen's Guide to Disaster Assistance](#)
- [IS 22 – Are You Ready? An In-Depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness](#)
- [IS 120 – An Orientation to Community Disaster Exercises](#)
- [IS 195 – Basic Incident Command System](#)
- [IS 301 – Radiological Emergency Response](#)
- [IS 317 – Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams](#)
- [IS 346 – An Orientation to Hazardous Materials for Medical Personnel](#)
- [IS 700 – National Incident Management System](#)
- [IS 800 – National Response Plan, An Introduction](#)

George Washington University Medical Center[Response to Emergencies and Disasters Institute \(READI\)](#)

A cooperative effort among George Washington University, George Mason University, and Shenandoah University to provide comprehensive emergency first responder training in topics addressing weapons of mass destruction in the national capital region provided through the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Domestic Preparedness. Training, coordinated through READI, is free of charge to participants and agencies interested in hosting courses.

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)[Training for Radiation Emergencies](#)

A course developed by the IAFF for the US Department of Energy (DOE) to provide needed information and a method to train fire departments and other emergency responders who may be called on to respond to accidents involving radioactive materials along DOE transportation corridors and routes.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and World Health Organization (WHO)[Medical Preparedness and Response: Training for Radiation and Emergency Preparedness and Response](#)

Free, online training course designed to help medical professionals recognize radiation injuries; provide first aid, specialized medical treatment and follow-up to radiation exposed/contaminated people; and organize emergency medical preparedness and response in the case of a radiation incident. Educational material is prepared for a five-day IAEA and WHO sponsored course for health professionals and others responsible for training, planning, and managing of medical response in a radiation emergency.

Johns Hopkins Center for Public Health Preparedness[Radiation Terror](#)

This training product is an introduction to environmental health sciences applicable to terror in general and radiation terror in particular. Topic 1 introduces users to the basic concepts and principles of environmental health sciences that are applicable to terror preparedness. Topic 2 introduces users to the basic concepts of radiation and radioactivity, to the use of radiation and radioactivity in terrorism, and offers a practical approach to using environmental health and radiation concepts in developing a terror preparedness program and responding to a terrorist threat.

National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP)[Medical Response to Terrorism](#)

Developed by the NAEMSP, American Public Health Association, and National Association of State EMS Directors, this slide presentation is aimed at agencies, organizations, and individuals who must deal with the health consequences of a terrorist attack by summarizing important aspects associated with incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.

National Library of Medicine (NLM)[Toxicology Tutorials](#)

The “Toxicology Tutors” are intended to provide a basic understanding of toxicology as an aide for users of toxicology literature contained in the NLM’s chemical and toxicological databases.

New York University (NYU) School of Medicine, Center for Health Information Preparedness[Psychological Aspects of Terrorism and Disaster Medicine](#)

A free, online course developed by the NYU Center for Health Information Preparedness, a CDC-funded specialty center for public health preparedness

North Carolina Center for Public Health Preparedness

Offers the following free on-line tutorials:

[Chemical Terrorism: Introduction & Classification, Chemical Weapons: Basic Concepts](#)[Chemical Weapons: Detection Basics \(Part I & II\)](#)[Chemical Weapons: Protection Basics](#)[Radiation Safety: Bioeffects, Protection and Standards & Radiation Detection](#)[Radiation Safety: Disaster Preparedness](#)[Radiation Safety: Types of Radiation](#)[Radiation Safety: Units](#)**Office Of Domestic Preparedness (ODP), U.S. Department of Justice**[Center for Domestic Preparedness \(Anniston, Alabama\)](#)

Offers specialized advanced training to state and local emergency responders in the management and remediation of incidents of domestic terrorism, especially those involving chemical agents and other toxic substances.

Radiological Emergency Assistance Center Training Site (REAC/TS)

The Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education’s (ORISE’s) Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site (REAC/TS) offers several courses in handling radiation emergencies. Taught both at the REAC/TS facility in Oak Ridge, TN, and at the various hospitals and nuclear facilities across the country, these courses train physicians, physicians’ assistants, nurses, health physicists, and others who may have to respond to a radiation accident. Through lectures, discussions, and exercises, participants learn the roles they play in the medical management of a radiation accident.

Dates, course descriptions, and respective course fees for:

[Radiation Emergency Management](#)[Health Physics in Radiation Emergencies](#)[Advanced Radiation Medicine](#)**Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM)**[Fundamentals of Disaster Management Course](#)

A 1-day interactive, instructor-led course including three hands-on skill stations to prepare healthcare professionals for large-scale disasters:

- Station 1: Triage/incident command
- Station 2: Decontamination/personal protection equipment
- Station 3: Presenting symptoms (biological and chemical weapons)

Texas A&M University

[National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center \(NERRTC\)](#)

NERRTC, a member of the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), was established to train local and state officials and emergency responders to prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism including those involving the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and other special incidents. Courses utilize hands-on, performance-oriented training and simulations to enhance learners' ability to respond to and manage WMD incidents. The training is conducted under realistic conditions either at the NERRTC in College Station, Texas, or on-site in your jurisdiction. Additionally, Texas A&M has developed an Interactive Internet WMD Awareness Course for emergency responders.

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

[Nevada Test Site Field Exercises](#)

The DOE Nevada Test Site (NTS) conducts large-scale field exercises using a wide range of live agent stimulants, as well as explosives. NTS also has developed and delivers a Radiological/Nuclear Agents course. NTS, in coordination with the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP), is establishing the Center for Exercise Excellence to train jurisdictions in the planning and conduct of exercises tailored to the unique threats faced by participating jurisdictions.

U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD)

[USAMRICD](#) offers a variety of interactive multimedia learning courses that are targeted toward the following objective: given a chemical casualty scenario, the student will apply the fundamentals of chemical agent terminology, mechanism of action, pathophysiology, and consideration of patient circumstances to the diagnosis and treatment of casualties and recommend appropriate treatment, decontamination and detection to reduce illness and injury due to exposure. Many of these courses are accredited for CME/CEU credits.

[Field Management of Biological/Chemical Casualties Course](#)

[Medical Management of Biological/Chemical Casualties Course](#)

University of Albany School of Public Health, Center for Public Health Preparedness

[Terrorism, Preparedness, and Public Health: An Introduction](#)

A free, six-lesson, online course for certificate and/or continuing education credit supported by a cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the Association of Schools of Public Health. The objective of the course is to provide public health workers and community partners (EMS, police, fire, emergency room personnel, etc.) with key fundamental concepts related to public health emergency preparedness. The six lessons include:

- Introduction to terrorism
- Epidemiology, surveillance, detection, and identification
- Biological agents as weapons
- Chemical and industrial agents as weapons
- Radiological weapons
- Community planning and public health preparedness

University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health

[Illinois Public Health Preparedness Center](#)

More than 60 Web-based courses are now available from the Illinois Public Health Preparedness Center. All courses are completely online, instructor-led, and self-paced; and are provided at no cost to registrants. Courses emphasize practice relevant competencies that cut across disciplines and specialties. Currently, there are nine course series targeting public health professionals and other front line responders from various backgrounds:

- Applied Epidemiology
- Community Health Assessment
- Environmental Health
- Infectious Disease Preparedness
- Public Health Administration
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Public Health Law, Advocacy and Policy Development
- Public Health Practice
- Public Health Program Development and Evaluation

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National Disaster Life Support™ Program

Program Overview

Years before the terrorist attacks in 2001, several academic centers began to develop disaster education programs to meet a perceived lack of medical disaster preparedness. Since the attacks, demand has increased for a nationally recognized course in “all-hazards” training to better prepare health care professionals, emergency response personnel, and others for mass casualty incidents. While nationally recognized training programs exist for cardiac life support and trauma management, there was no standardized training program for disaster management. To meet this need, a coordinated all-hazards training program was developed by a consortium of academic, state, and federal centers called the National Disaster Life Support Education Consortium™ (NDLSEC™), with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In 2003 the AMA, in collaboration with the Medical College of Georgia, University of Georgia, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health, American Public Health Association, National Association of EMS Physicians, and National Association of State EMS Directors, established a steering committee to coordinate efforts and resources of the AMA and the NDLSEC to enhance the education and training of health care professionals and others in disaster preparedness and emergency response. The AMA is the sponsoring and continuing medical education (CME) – accrediting organization for this initiative and provides direct oversight, management, and technical support.

The NDLS™ courses stress a comprehensive all-hazards approach to help physicians and other health professionals deal with catastrophic emergencies from terrorist acts as well as from explosions, fires, natural disasters (such as hurricanes and floods), and infectious diseases, which are much more likely to occur. Future enhancements will include electronic formats, opportunities for interactive learning, and detailed information on meeting the special needs of pediatric and other vulnerable populations.

Purpose

The overarching purpose of the NDLS courses is to provide the basic information and skill set that all health and safety workers need to competently respond to an intended or naturally occurring public health emergency. Such training will help create and sustain a seamless and integrated disaster life support system at the national, state, and community levels. As stand-alone courses, they can be incorporated into existing education programs and workshops, using a multidisciplinary approach. Training formats are flexible to meet the specific needs of the client.

Training Objectives

Course participants are expected to gain a fundamental understanding of their effective contributions to disaster management and their integrated roles and responsibilities inherent in a community, state, or regional response. The NDLS courses present a consistent approach to mass casualty management that will enable emergency responders to:

- Recognize the potential for a mass casualty incident and identify quickly when a dangerous incident has occurred;
- Understand how to rapidly alert the public health and emergency response systems at the local, state, and national levels;
- Cope with the unusual search, rescue, and triage challenges that occur in disaster situations;
- Understand how to meet the acute care needs of patients/victims in a safe and appropriate manner;
- Participate in a coordinated, multidisciplinary response to a terrorist event or other public health emergency;
- Become knowledgeable of personal safety measures to protect themselves when responding to an emergency situation;
- Become knowledgeable of personal roles, responsibilities, and limitations during a crisis situation (being alert, reporting of suspected event, incident command systems, legal implications, scope of practice and credentialing issues);
- Communicate confidently with the public and the media about the response plans and capabilities; and
- Be able to locate additional literature and resources for assistance.

Validation and Accreditation

Designed by a consortium of experts and academic medical centers, the NDLS program has been validated through an all-disciplines rigid, academic peer review methodology. Courses are evaluated and enhanced through external reviewers from multiple agencies, institutions, and organizations. Upon successful completion of each course, participants receive a certificate of training and course completion card and are eligible for CME credit. Training is valid for a 4-year period.

Core Disaster Life Support® (CDLS®)

CDLS is an introduction to all-hazards preparedness for basic first responders, community officials, business owners, and other concerned citizens. It is delivered over 4 hours through in-person didactic and interactive lectures with standardized slide sets and an accompanying text. The course provides a brief overview of natural and accidental man-made events, traumatic and explosive events, nuclear and radiological events, biological events, and chemical events. The focus of the course is discussion and application of a unique approach to disaster management called the DISASTER paradigm™ (Box 1). The DISASTER paradigm organizes the providers' preparation and response to disaster management. The overarching aim is to introduce participants to basic concepts and terms that are reinforced in greater detail throughout the BDLS® and ADLS® courses.

Box 1. CDLS Course Topics

Overview and Introduction to the *DISASTER* Paradigm

D – Detection

I – Incident Command

S – Scene Safety

A – Assess Hazards

S – Support

T – Triage and Treatment

E – Evacuation

R – Recovery

Local Public Health and Planning and Recovery Strategies

In the future, the CDLS course also will be available in a distance-learning model via the Internet. Computer-generated simulation will be used to enforce concepts learned in each chapter.

Basic Disaster Life Support™ (BDLS)

BDLS is delivered through in-person didactic and interactive lectures with standardized slide sets and an accompanying text. Information can be delivered over 1 day or over multiple days. In the future, the BDLS course also will be available in a distance-learning model via the Internet. Computer-generated simulation will be used to enforce concepts learned in each chapter.

The BDLS course is a review of the all-hazards topics including natural and accidental man-made events; traumatic and explosive events; nuclear and radiological events; biological events; and chemical events (Box 2). Also included is information on such critical areas as the health care professional's role in the public health and incident management systems, community mental health, and special needs of underserved and vulnerable populations.

Box 2. BDLS Course Topics

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>DISASTER</i> Paradigm • Natural Disasters • Traumatic and Explosive Events • Nuclear and Radiological Events • Biological Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemical Events • Psychosocial Aspects • Public Health Implications of Disasters • Evaluation and Testing |
|---|--|

The recognition and management of the disaster scene and victims is reinforced through the *DISASTER* paradigm, which was introduced in the Core Disaster Life Support to organize the learners' preparation and response to disaster management. It emphasizes an all-hazards approach to mass casualty incident management and facilitates ongoing qualitative and quantitative assessment of an incident.

The triage system for BDLS is the *MASS Triage™* model (Box 3). *Id-me!* is a simple mnemonic for sorting patients during triage of mass casualties, which is used effectively in the *MASS Triage* model (Box 4). A detailed discussion and application of these assessment tools is discussed and reinforced throughout the BDLS and ADLS courses.

Box 3. MASS Triage	Box 4. “Id-me”!
<p>M – Move A – Assess S – Sort S – Send</p> <p><i>MASS Triage</i> is a disaster triage system that utilizes US military triage categories with a proven means of handling large numbers of casualties in a mass casualty incident (MCI).</p>	<p>I – Immediate D – Delayed M – Minimal E – Expectant</p> <p><i>Id-me!</i> is an easy to remember phrase that incorporates a mnemonic for sorting patients during MCI triage. It is utilized effectively in the <i>MASS Triage</i> model.</p>

The BDLS course meets CFR 1910.120 requirement for Hazardous Materials Awareness.

Advanced Disaster Life Support™ (ADLS)

ADLS is a more advanced practicum course for the trained BDLS provider. It is an intensive 2-day course that allows students to demonstrate competencies in casualty decontamination, essential skills, and mass casualty incident information systems/technology applications (Box 5). Using simulated all-hazards scenarios and mass casualty incidents, it makes use of 4 interactive sessions in which participants treat simulated patients in various disaster drills and situations. Training is focused on the development of hands-on skills to allow participants to apply the knowledge learned in BDLS.

During ADLS, the interactive scenarios and drills utilize high-fidelity manikins and volunteer patients to gain a realistic experience in treating those pathologic patient conditions not routinely encountered by responders and health care providers. Hands-on exercises teach practical skills, such as decontamination and use of protective equipment, and provide instruction in topics that traditionally are not addressed in the education of most health care professionals.

Box 5. ADLS Core Training Areas

An advanced practicum course demonstrating competencies in these areas:

- Medical decontamination (PPE and Decon)
- *MASS Triage*
- Media and communications
- Health care facilities and community disaster planning
- Legal issues of disaster response
- Mass fatality management
- Essential skills station
- All-hazards training scenarios

The ADLS course meets CFR 1910.120 requirement for Hazardous Materials Operations.

For More Information

For information about the NDLS courses, please contact:

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Information also is available on the AMA Web site at <http://www.ama-assn.org/pub/category/6206.html>.

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