

DECONTAMINATION JOB AID

About Decontamination

Most radioactive contamination rests on the surface of the outer layer of clothing. It will be removed when the outer layer of clothing is removed. For contamination in the hair or on the skin, have the person wash using mild soap and lukewarm water. Some people may only need limited decontamination, such as removing an article of clothing or washing their hands, while others may need to shower. Review each person's contamination assessment form to determine the appropriate method of decontamination. If resources do not permit individual review, ask everyone to report to this station to shower.

Screening Criteria

miliR/hr
microR/hr
CPM

Order of Operations

1. Fill out two ID tags with the person's name, ID number, time, and date. One is for the person's clothing, the other is for personal belongings.
2. Collect personal belongings (e.g., wallets, jewelry, keys) in a one-gallon Ziploc® bag. Tape or tie the one ID tag to this bag, and have the items screened for contamination.
3. Give the person a trash bag and provide instructions to carefully remove clothing. Tell the person to pull the shirt slowly over the head while holding breath, place the clothes in the bag, and tie it shut. Attach the other ID tag to this bag and store it in a secure location, away from people.
4. Provide a mild liquid soap for skin and hair decontamination, and give the person the following instructions:
 - A) Wash your hair first. Tilt your head back to wash and rinse your hair.
 - B) Gently wash your skin. Lather well but do not scrub hard.
 - C) Rinse soap and water away from your face. Try not to get it in your eyes or mouth.
 - D) Use a clean towel to dry your face first, then your hair, then your body.
 - E) If you need help, ask a shower attendant.
5. When dry, provide temporary clothing or a clean towel (for cover-up) and dispose of all used towels.
6. Screen the person for contamination.

Determining the Next Step

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|--|---|--|
| <p>If the person is clean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clean clothing. • Return personal belongings. • Send person to Registration. | <p>If the person is still contaminated after the first shower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask person to wash again, paying close attention to contaminated areas. | <p>If the person is still contaminated after the second shower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person may be internally contaminated. • Note this information on the contamination assessment form. • Escort person to Registration. |
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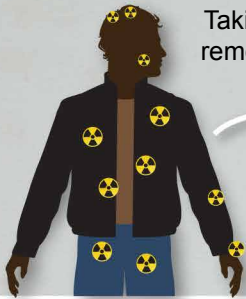
Image 1: Storing contaminated clothing



Image 2: Indoor shower facility for decontamination

DECONTAMINATION FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

① TAKE OFF OUTER LAYER OF CLOTHING



Taking off your outer layer of clothing can remove up to 90% of radioactive material.

Be very careful in removing your clothing to prevent radioactive dust from shaking loose.



Put the clothing in a plastic bag or other sealable container.

Put the bag in an out-of-the-way place, away from other people and pets.

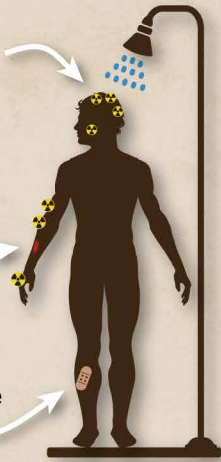
② WASH YOURSELF OFF

If you can take a shower:

Use soap and shampoo. Do not use conditioner because it will cause radioactive material to stick to your hair.

Do not scald, scrub, or scratch your skin.

Keep cuts and scrapes covered when washing to keep from getting radioactive material in open wounds.



If you cannot take a shower:

Wash your hands, face, and parts of your body that were uncovered at a sink or faucet. Use soap and plenty of water.



If you cannot use a sink or faucet:

Use a moist wipe, clean wet cloth, or damp paper towel to wipe the parts of your body that were uncovered. Pay special attention to your hands and face.



Blow your nose and wipe your eyelids, eyelashes, and ears with a moist wipe, clean wet cloth, or damp paper towel.



③ PUT ON CLEAN CLOTHES

If you have clean clothes:

Clothes stored in a closet or drawer away from radioactive material are safe to wear.



If you do not have clean clothes:

Take off your outer layer of clothing, shake or brush off your clothes, and put your clothes back on.



Rewash your hands, face, and exposed skin at a sink or faucet.



④ HELP OTHERS AND PETS



Wear waterproof gloves and a dust mask if you can.

Keep cuts and scrapes covered when washing to keep radioactive material out of the wound.



Rewash your hands, face, and parts of your body that were uncovered at a sink or faucet.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention