

Banner Poison and Drug Information Center shares safety tips on riot control agents

Rinse your face immediately

PHOENIX (June 5, 2020) – During these times of uncertainty, poison centers across the nation are warning the public of riot control agents and how to protect yourself if you were to be exposed. While the majority of protests are peaceful, the [Banner Poison and Drug Information Center](#) has received calls from the public who have been exposed to riot control agent products. These agents refer to a category of chemicals, including tear gas and pepper spray, which can cause acute eye pain, tearing skin irritation and respiratory tract irritation. People who can be exposed to these agents by skin or eye contact as well as inhalation.

Recommended safety tips if exposed include:

- Immediately remove any exposed clothing
- Rinse your face immediately; if it is in your eyes, rinse for at least 10 minutes
- Wash the agent off your skin with large amounts of soap and water
- Patients with pre-existing lung problems (e.g. asthma, COPD) are at increased risk for breathing problems

The poison center would also like to advise people to continue to hydrate well throughout the day and bring water with them when protesting. With excessive heat warnings in the Valley, it puts everyone at higher risk for heat-related illness and injury.

In addition, COVID-19 is still present in our community. We encourage all protesters to continue to follow CDC recommendations to protect themselves and others from this virus. Those recommendations include:

- Do not attend protests if you are ill.
- Wear a mask when you're in public near others.
- Stay six feet away from others.
- Bring sanitizer with you so that you can wash your hands frequently.

If you or a loved one believe there has been exposure to any poison, medication, or chemical, please call 1-800-222-1222. The poison centers can assist in the next steps, including whether it's necessary to seek additional medical attention.

About Banner Poison and Drug Information Center

The [Poison and Drug Information Centers](#) at the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in Tucson, and at [Banner – University Medical Center Phoenix](#), provide free and confidential poison and drug information to the public and health care professionals. The hotlines operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The two centers serve all of Arizona and are part of 55 centers across the nation that are accredited by American Association of Poison Control Centers. Call 1-800-222-1222 from any location to reach the poison center nearest you.

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