



# Earthquake Toolkit

We are Here to Help.

*Mental health and wellbeing resources to help you stay balanced during an emotionally challenging time.*





## Preparing for an Earthquake

**Four basic steps will help you be as prepared as possible for an earthquake.**

1. Identify any hazards and heavy, movable items that could cause injury during an earthquake and secure them.
2. Create a disaster plan that includes specific steps to take during an earthquake, immediately after an earthquake, and during the days and weeks beyond that. They should include: knowing emergency exits of your building, first aid steps, communication information and contacts, and home insurance information.
3. Organize needed supplies in convenient locations. The most important supplies should be shoes, glasses or contacts, flashlight, dust mask, some sort of noise alert like a whistle, medications, first-aid kit, bottled water, and emergency cash. They might include emergency clothing, hard hat, gloves, tools, snack food, radio, toiletries, and comfort items (especially for children).
4. Organize important documents. Having copies of identification materials, insurance cards, emergency contact numbers, photos of your belongings for insurance claims should be gathered together in a sealed plastic bag and protected, so you have it at hand easily when you need it.

For more information on these four steps, USGS provides more in-depth information: <https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/what-can-i-do-be-prepared-earthquake>





## What to do During an Earthquake

- The most important thing to try to do is to stay calm and stay where you are.
- If you are indoors, the best places to stand are against a wall near the center of the building, in a doorway, or under very heavy stable furniture. Stay away from windows and outside doors.
- If you are outdoors, stay away from power lines or anything that might fall. Staying in the open is the best way to stay safe. Stay away from buildings too since objects might fall off the building or even the building could start to fall.
- If you are in a car, stop the car as safely and quickly as you can, and stay inside the car until the earthquake is over.
- Avoid: matches, candles, flames, and elevators.

### As soon as the earthquake is over, take the following immediate steps:

- Check yourself and the people around you for injuries, provide care as needed, and seek help if seriously injured.
- Check for water, gas, or electric line damage and shut off if damaged. If you smell gas, open all windows and doors, leave immediately, and report it to authorities.
- Turn on radio or open emergency information online.
- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- Be careful of broken glass, debris, and any property damage.
- Stay away from beaches and damaged areas.
- If you are at school or work, follow their emergency plan and/or the instructions of the person in charge.
- Prepare for aftershocks.





## Helpful Earthquake Resources

[USGS Earthquake Preparation Resources](#)

[USGS Earthquake Hazards Program](#)

[CDC Earthquake Information](#)

[FEMA Earthquake Risk](#)

[EERI School Earthquake Safety Resources](#)

[Resources for Workplace Earthquake Safety](#) (specific to California but information applicable to all)

[CDC Coping with a Disaster](#)



## Friends & Family Can Help After a Traumatic Event

### Help Them Support You

Your friends and family can offer you support after experiencing a traumatic event. They will be very concerned about you, and you can help them support you by letting them know how you are feeling. Even though they care, they didn't experience the trauma with you. It's okay to remind them about your experience and ask them to be patient as you recover. This will help them help you. Share this toolkit with them so they know what to expect and how they can offer support as you need it.

### Explain Your Feelings

Tell your friends and family you have gone through a traumatic experience. Let them know that you will need their support and understanding to cope and recover, and that it may be weeks, or even months, before the effects of this experience have diminished. Also let them know you may be experiencing some of the following feelings and behaviors:

- Increased anxiety or fear
- Short temper or irritability
- Nightmares and sleep problems
- Confusion and/or short term memory loss
- Difficulty making decisions
- Fear of being alone
- Physical aches and pains
- Tendency to withdraw

### Tell Friends & Family How They Can Help

"I might be feeling or acting differently for a while. Here are some ways you can help when I'm struggling:"

- Be patient - don't just tell me to think positive
- Listen and try to understand my feelings
- Ask how you can help
- Temporarily take over some of my responsibilities
- Help me feel safe again: *(Drive me to work, help me feel safe by installing new safety precautions at home such as door locks, run errands with me, or just spend some extra time with me.)*

**A traumatic event can trigger memories of other unrelated traumas, such as an illness, injury, or the past death of a loved one.** If you are having other traumatic memories, tell someone. Your friends and family can only help if they know what you are dealing with. So if your feelings or behaviors are changing or getting worse, let someone know so they can support your needs.

If you don't feel comfortable talking to your friends and family, or if you need more help than they can offer, you should **reach out to professionals by calling the EAP.**

## 21 Things You Can Do While You're Living Through a Traumatic Experience

1. Take immediate action to ensure your safety and the safety of others. If it's possible, remove yourself from the event/scene in order to avoid further traumatic exposure.
2. Address your acute medical needs (e.g., If you're having difficulty breathing, experiencing chest pains or palpitations, seek immediate medical attention).
3. Find a safe place that offers shelter, water, food, and sanitation.
4. Become aware of how the event is affecting you (i.e., your feelings, thoughts, actions, and your physical and spiritual reactions).
5. Know that your reactions are normal responses to an abnormal event. You are not "losing it" or "going crazy."
6. Speak with your physician or healthcare provider and make him/her aware of what has happened to you.
7. Be aware of how you're holding-up when there are children around you. Children will take their cues from the adults around them.
8. Try to obtain information. Knowing the facts about what has happened will help you to keep functioning.
9. If possible, surround yourself with family and loved ones. Realize that the event could be affecting them, too.
10. Tell your story. And, allow yourself to feel. It's okay not to be okay during a traumatic experience.
11. You may experience a desire to withdraw and isolate, causing a strain on significant others. Resist the urge to shut down and retreat into your own world.
12. Traumatic stress may compromise your ability to think clearly. If you find it difficult to concentrate when someone is speaking to you, focus on the specific words they are saying and work to actively listen. Slow down the conversation and try repeating what you have just heard.
13. Don't make important decisions when you're feeling overwhelmed. Allow trusted family members or friends to assist you with necessary decision-making.
14. If stress is causing you to react physically, use controlled breathing techniques to stabilize yourself. Take a slow deep breath by inhaling through your nose, hold your breath for 5 seconds and then exhale through your mouth. Upon exhalation, think the words "relax," "let go," or "I'm handling this." Repeat this process several times.
15. Realize that repetitive thinking and sleep difficulties are normal reactions. Don't fight the sleep difficulty. Try the following: Eliminate caffeine 4 hours prior to your bedtime, create the best sleep environment you can, consider taking a few moments before turning out the lights to write down your thoughts thus emptying your mind.
16. Give yourself permission to rest, relax, and engage in non-threatening activity. Read, listen to music, consider taking a warm bath, etc.
17. Physical exercise may help to dissipate the stress energy that has been generated by your experience. Take a walk, ride a bike, or swim.
18. Create a journal. Writing about your experience may help to expose yourself to painful thoughts and feelings and, ultimately, enable you to assimilate your experience.
19. If you find that your experience is too powerful, allow yourself the advantage of professional and/or spiritual guidance, support, and education.
20. Try to maintain your schedule. Traumatic events will disrupt the sense of normalcy. We are all creatures of habit. By maintaining our routines, we can maintain a sense of control at a time when circumstances may lead us to feel a loss of control.
21. Crises present opportunities. Cultivate a mission and purpose. Seize the energy from your experience and use it to propel you to set realistic goals, make decisions, and take action.

Source: American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress





## We Are Here to Help

EAP benefits are available to all employees and their families at NO COST to you. The EAP offers confidential advice, support, and practical solutions to help you through your grief and loss. You can access these confidential services by calling the toll-free number below and speaking with our care team or accessing online.

### Short-Term Therapy

For a deeper level of support, members can request short-term therapy by calling Uprise Health. Our nationwide provider network of more than 60,000 counselors can be filtered by criteria including geography, clinical specialty, cultural background, and other preferences, to ensure a perfect fit for you. After speaking with our care team, you will be provided with a list of providers. You can schedule an appointment yourself or ask the care team for assistance scheduling.

### 24-hour Crisis Support

During business hours, members who are in crisis are connected with an Uprise Health clinician who will stabilize your situation and refer you to appropriate support. After-hours calls are answered by behavioral health professionals located within the U.S. If you are in life threatening situation, please call 9-1-1 as you would do for any other medical/life emergency.

### Online Peer Support Groups

As part of your EAP program, you can request up to 10 online peer support groups where you will have a safe and confidential place to speak with others who have similar issues. Please call Uprise Health and speak with our care team to learn more about the Grief and Loss support group.



#### Contact Uprise Health

Call: 1-800-834-3773

Visit: [claremonteap.com](https://claremonteap.com)