

My Plan: How to Disinfect My Drinking Water



One part of having a good emergency plan for your health is to know about why and how to disinfect your drinking water. Drinking water is disinfected to kill bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause illness and disease. You can keep distilled or bottled water on hand for drinking. If you run out of stored water, you may need to disinfect your water for drinking, cooking, or brushing your teeth. However, you should not use disinfected water for dialysis.

Why Should I Disinfect My Drinking Water?

You should disinfect your drinking water if:

- A boil water advisory has been issued for your community
- You are using water directly from a stream, lake or shallow well
- Lab tests of your water show that it is contaminated
- You are traveling in an area where water is not treated
- Your community water supply is affected by a flood, earthquake or other disaster

How Do I Disinfect Water?

There are several ways to disinfect water including boiling and the use of household bleach.

Boiling:

Boiling is the best way to kill bacteria, viruses and parasites. To purify your water boil it for at least 10 minutes.

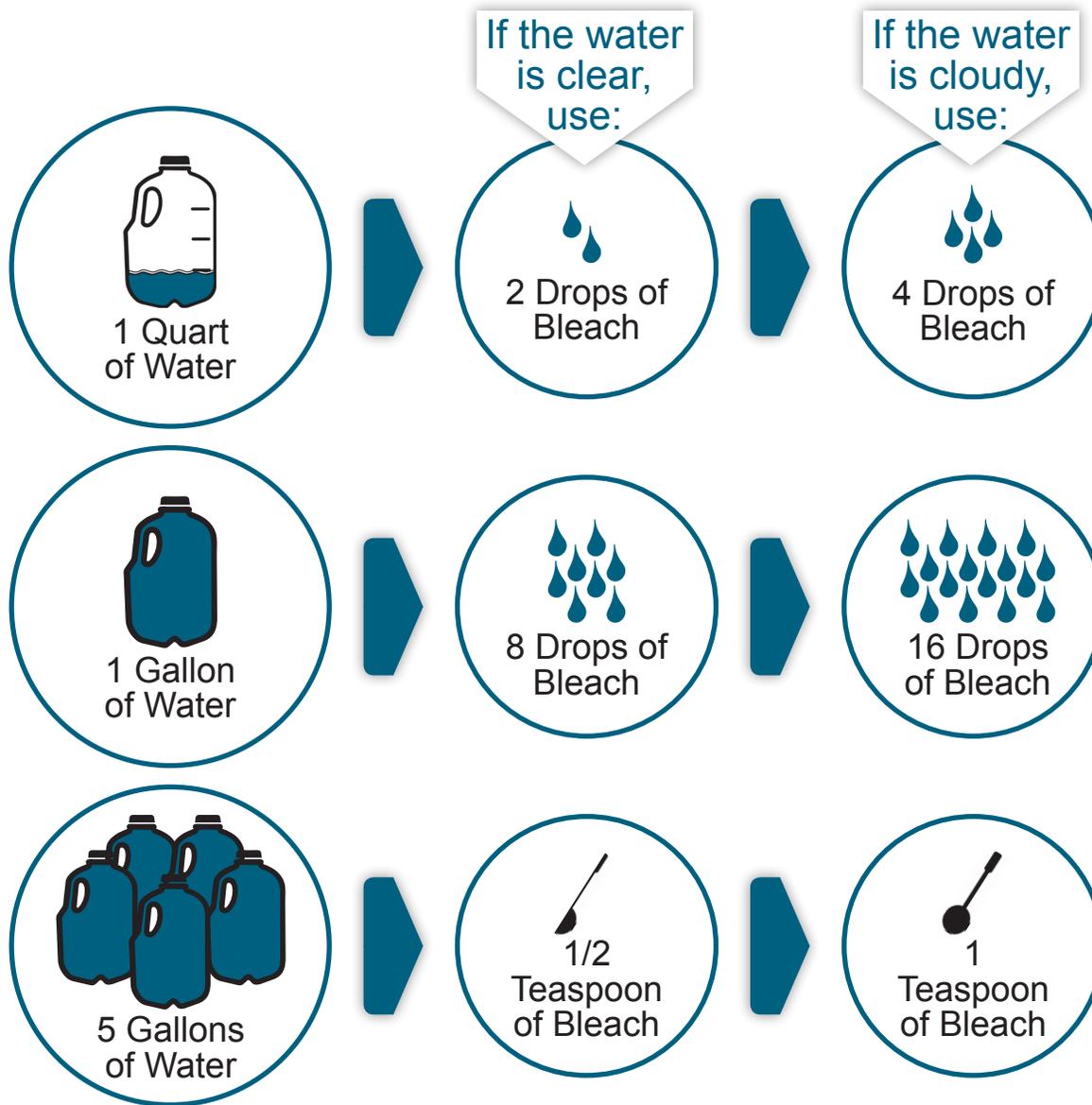
Using household bleach:

Make sure to use 5.25% sodium hypochlorite solution found in household chlorine bleach. Do not use bleach that has active ingredients other than hypochlorite.

Follow these steps:

1. Read the label to make sure you have the right kind of bleach.
2. Use unscented household bleach and warm water.
3. Strain water through a clean cloth or handkerchief to remove any sediment, floating matter, or glass.
4. Look at the water to see if it is clear or cloudy.
5. Mix the water and bleach together carefully by stirring or shaking them in a container using the amounts on the next page.
5. Let the mix stand for 30 minutes before using it.
5. The water should have a slight chlorine odor. If it does not, add the same amount of bleach again, mix thoroughly, and let it stand for an additional 15 minutes before using it.

Do not drink water from a swimming pool or spa because of the harmful chemicals used to treat the water.



My Questions

Ask Your Care Team:

- When and why should I disinfect my water?
- How should I disinfect my water?
- Are there other methods to disinfect my water?

Source: <http://www.kcercoalition.com/pdf/101501.pdf>

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