

PEPPER SPRAY TIPS

Overview

OC Pepper Spray (Oleoresin Capsicum) is one of the most effective non-lethal tools available. It differs from the old tear gas types (CS & CN) in that the tear gas was found to be less effective against those who were resistant to pain if under chemical influence or psychologically resistant. Pepper spray, on the other hand, gets its effects from hot peppers which upon contact with mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth) causes immediate shutting of the eyes for temporary blindness, uncontrollable coughing and restricted breathing as well as burning pain. The person's ability to fight is reduced to a minimum and possibly stopped completely though we should always be prepared for resistance. Some sprays may not be as strong or some individuals may try to fight through it but the effects will give you the chance to fend off that person and escape. Our goal is simply to stop the attack and escape in order to go home to our families!

Most pepper spray products also have a UV dye that will mark the person for identification by police. There are also sprays that combine both OC and CS for the best effects of both, Freeze Plus P and Mace Triple Action are examples. Pepper sprays are the most common and are very effective by themselves; Heatwave brand pepper spray is tested to be one of the hottest sprays. Most brands advertise 10-15% concentration and a heat index of 2 million scoville heat units, but those numbers do not automatically mean that they are equal in heat. Some states have restrictions and specify certain amounts.

Defense sprays cannot be brought onto airplanes, and many countries would restrict them as well.

Models of sprays include large bear repellants, 2oz personal size to 4oz home size, smaller key chain units, and disguised units such as pagers, jogging weights and others. The spray can be dispersed in a stream or more of a cone shaped fog/mist.

Carry and Use

We didn't learn to drive by reading a manual, the same applies to defense sprays. Practice first to get familiar with the effective range, # of sprays, spray type, carry and drawing methods. You MUST PRACTICE, just like any other weapon, so that when you need it it will be easier to deploy and use. Likewise, with any other weapon, you should seek training, practice, and be willing to use it!

The **FIRST THING** you should do when you open the package is go outside and give a quick (1/2 second) test shot to ensure the product is not a dud. Sprays have shelf lives of a few years, Check the expiration date. You should give a test shot every 4 months to ensure the propellant is still good and not depleted. Realize that a small key chain unit will need to be replaced every year while a 2oz unit will last longer. Replace after 2 years or once it's 2/3 full you should replace it and use the old one to practice with and even teach someone else! You don't want an empty canister when you need it!

When practicing, keep in mind that the labeled range is realistically shorter. A key chain unit is good only for up close 2-3' while a 2oz unit may be able to reach 8' effectively. Wind is a major factor, and you must expect to get some effects from fumes even if you're not sprayed directly. For practice, put a paper plate or piece of paper on a tree and imagine it's a face. You must hit the person in the eyes, nose and mouth. Make sure you're up wind but get a good whiff of the fumes to know what to expect. You can put a shot into a cup or can and take a whiff to get some of the effects. If you ever have to use it it may be in a car or enclosed area in which case you will be coughing and gasping more so from the fumes, BUT it's still better than getting blasted in the face for full effect! Practice a survival mindset that even if you are injured from attack or coughing from fumes you must fight and get away. Many have done so. You can survive.

Practice different ways to carry and draw the spray so that you can grab it and present it quickly without looking for it. Never bury it in a purse, Keep it near the opening and attach strategically with Velcro Or keep in a separate pocket. Keep out of sight and try to make it a surprise if you must use it. The attacker may cover their face and make it difficult to hit effectively (fumes will still get them). Spray in appx. 2 second bursts. It is also beneficial and highly recommended you take a non-sport self-defense class to learn at least basic skills to help you escape. You're not training to go 12 rounds, it should be over with in seconds! Seek training from more than 1 class, get a couple to learn as much as you can from different instructors. For martial arts training, find non-sport schools.

Trust your instincts. When you FEEL something is not right or someone makes you uneasy it is best to take advantage of that defense mechanism created in us! Pay attention to your surroundings and carry your weapon of choice that you train with.

When you sense a threat, that is when you should be prepared to use it. Have it ready in your hand.

Like insurance, it's better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have

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