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Health

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BILLS
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OR CANCER? p.16

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THE HealthGUIDE

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Want to know how to survive a night in the woods or learn the right way to do the Heimlich? Go to Health.com/survival to find out.

How to survive *(almost)* anything

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES EVERY MODERN WOMAN MUST KNOW.

By ALLISON AVERY, TAYLOR DAHL, BETHANY HARBISON, AND BRITTANI RENAUD

Page 169

How to protect yourself

Experts answer tough questions on staying safe from attackers (scary dogs, too).

Page 170

How to survive a bad economy

Four tips to help keep you solvent and sane. Plus, how to never get lost—and the one thing you never want to be without.

Page 172

How to feed unexpected guests

Quickie recipes from Mark Bittman. Also, learn how to survive a blizzard, high winds, and more.

Page 184

How to fix a flat tire

Here, six steps to changing a tire yourself. And we also reveal survivor's secret weapons.

How to protect yourself

Experts answer your tough questions on staying safe from attackers (scary dogs, too).



Swing your handbag at the attacker's Adam's apple, eyes, ears, or nose. If he's able to grab it, though, let go; you don't want him to use it to pull you closer, when the purse may be all he wants.



Use your heel—where nine times your body weight is concentrated—to stomp on your attacker's foot. If you're not close enough to stomp, heel-kick your attacker's knee.



If you're attacked from behind, throw your arm back and try to smash your watch face into the assailant's nose. Rings on your fingers can do damage, too.

Are there times a woman should *not* fight back?

If someone's grabbing your purse, let him have it. If they're trying to take your car, let them have it.

When *should* I fight back?

If an attacker is trying to get you into a car, fight back loudly with every bit of strength and courage you have, says Lori Hartman Gervasi, author of *Fight Like a Girl ... and Win: Defense Decisions for Women*, and a black belt self-defense expert trained in American karate. "The odds of surviving go way down once you're in a car or secluded location," she says. Most attackers are looking for an easy victim,

says Sifu Toy, creator of the self-defense DVD *Armed and Fashioned*: "The more you fight back, the more likely it is that he'll give up and run away."

Should I carry pepper spray?

Gervasi likes pepper spray because it provides a way to fight back without getting too close. "You don't even have to touch the guy," she says. But it's useless if it's buried in your purse. She recommends that you carry keys in one hand, pepper spray in the other, and your cell phone in an easy-to-reach pocket. "If a threatening person comes too close or begins to attack, quickly cock the pepper spray into the ready position, aim, and

spray the attacker in the face," Gervasi says.

What else can I do?

Use whatever you have—purse, shoes, rings on your fingers—to fight back (see above), Toy says.

If you're kicking, go low and hard. A shot to the groin may cause pain, but it's hard to do and you may lose your balance or give the attacker a foot to grab onto. When you make a fist, wrap your thumb around so it rests beneath the first and second knuckles; this creates a flat fist (no thumb sticking up or tucked under your fingers) that can inflict more damage and helps prevent broken knuckles. ●

How to deal with a scary dog

Even the most devoted dog lovers should tread lightly around unfamiliar canines. Follow the three-no's rule, says Cesar Millan of The National Geographic Channel's *Dog Whisperer*—no touch, no talk, no eye contact. And if Fido starts to look frantic, do this ...

1. IGNORE THE DOG

"The more boring you are, the less you feed the dog's anxiety and the less likely he is to attack," says dog trainer Victoria Stilwell, host of The Animal Planet's *It's Me or the Dog*.

2. MAKE YOURSELF SMALL

If the dog shows signs of aggression—growls or bares its teeth, has pinned-down ears, a straight tail, or raised hackles—turn to your side so you appear smaller and less intimidating, then slowly inch away.

3. IF THE DOG ATTACKS, PUT SOMETHING BETWEEN YOU

Use whatever you have—a rolled-up jacket, purse, or any solid object—to create a buffer between you and the dog. "Try to redirect the dog's bites onto that item," Stilwell says.

4. COVER THE DOG'S HEAD WITH YOUR COAT

Toss whatever garment you have handy over the dog's head. The sudden darkness may momentarily confuse the animal, giving you time to escape. Stilwell says this technique is safer than using pepper spray, which may increase the dog's anxiety.

5. AS A LAST RESORT, CURL INTO A BALL ON THE GROUND

"As hard as this is, remain calm," Millan says. By curling up with your face tucked into your chest and your hands covering the back of your neck, your most vulnerable parts will be protected. Wait it out, Millan says, and the dog may lose interest.