

To Whom this May Concern,

I live in the Irvington neighborhood and am a hospitalist at the Portland VA. As a mother and a doctor, I am so tired of seeing people killed or seriously harmed by excessive force used by police. I am so tired of not having our government acknowledge and apologize for the fact that we took Native American lands and then build American wealth on the backs of enslaved and kidnapped Africans. Black Americans continue to be oppressed by systemic racism- in schools, by the police, getting a mortgage, by health care..... The list goes on and on. These protests are long overdue. These protests are the right thing to do. How long can a population continue to have community members killed senselessly by those who are supposed to serve and protect? Government officials should be out there with them and certainly be on the front lines of change. One of those changes that can be made is banning tear gas-not restricting it. Tear gas is not allowed in war. Why in the world is it being used on protesters? BAN TEAR GAS. It can cause serious harm to people- vision damage, asthma, etc. Even if it acts as an irritant to disperse a crowd, the gas then makes people cough and have excess secretions during a viral pandemic. That alone is completely irresponsible and should not be allowed during a pandemic (or any other time). Chemical agents harm civilians, police officers, neighborhoods, and health care workers. They have no place in our communities and our state.

Sincerely,
Rose Heuser, MD
Portland, OR