

# Preparedness Basics

## Get and Stay informed

Learn the types of disasters or emergencies that may likely occur in your area. These events can range from those affecting only you and your family, like a home fire or medical emergency, to those affecting your entire community, like an earthquake or flood.

## Make a Plan

With your family or household members, discuss how to prepare and respond to the types of emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play.

Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and how you will work together as a team.

Practice as many elements of your plan as possible.

## Build a Kit

Being prepared means being equipped with the proper supplies you may need in the event of an emergency or disaster. Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry **emergency preparedness kit** that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.

## Get involved

There are many ways to Get Involved especially before an emergency or a disaster occurs, the content found at <https://www.ready.gov/get-involved> will give you some ideas of how you can take action in your community.

## Build A Kit

Being prepared means having your **own food, water and other supplies** to last for several days. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency

### Basic Disaster Supplies Kit

- Water (one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food)
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape (to shelter in place)
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties (for personal sanitation)
- Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities)
- Manual can opener (for food)
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

### Additional Supplies:

- Masks (for everyone ages 2 and above), soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes to disinfect surfaces

- Prescription medications. About half of all Americans take a prescription medicine every day. An emergency can make it difficult for them to refill their prescription or to find an open pharmacy. Organize and protect your prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and vitamins to prepare for an emergency.
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, antacids or laxatives
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes and diaper rash cream
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing appropriate for your climate and sturdy shoes
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

<https://www.ready.gov/kit>

In addition to having your basic survival supplies, an emergency kit should have items to meet your individual needs in various emergencies. Consider the items you use every day and which ones you may need to add to your kit.

### **Tips for Medications**

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about how you can create an emergency supply of medicines. Keep a list of your prescription medicines. Include information about your diagnosis, dosage, frequency, medical supply needs and allergies.

Store extra nonprescription drugs, like pain and fever relievers, antihistamines and antidiarrheal medicines.

Have a cooler and chemical ice packs available to chill medicines that need to be refrigerated.

### **Tips for People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

- Weather radio (with text display and a flashing alert)
- Extra hearing-aid batteries
- Pen and paper (in case you have to communicate with someone who does not know sign language)
- Battery operated lantern to enable communication by sign language or lip reading, especially when the electricity is out and it's dark.

### **Tips for People Who are Blind or Have Low Vision**

Mark emergency supplies with Braille labels or large print. Keep a list of your emergency supplies and where you bought them on a portable flash drive or make an audio file that is kept in a safe place where you can access it.

Keep communication devices for your particular needs, such as a Braille or deaf-blind communications device as part of your emergency supply kit.

### **Tips for People with Speech Disability**

If you use an augmentative communications device or other assistive technologies plan how you will evacuate with the devices or how you will replace equipment if it is lost or destroyed. Keep model information and note where the equipment came from (Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, etc.). Plan how you will communicate with others if your equipment is not working, including laminated cards with phrases and/or pictogram.

### **Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities**

- Keep handheld electronic devices charged and loaded with videos and activities.
- Purchase spare chargers for electronic devices and keep them charged.
- Include sheets and twine or a small pop-up tent (to decrease visual stimulation in a busy room or to provide instant privacy).
- Consider a pair of noise-canceling headphones to decrease auditory stimuli.
- Have comfort snacks available.

### **Tips for People with a Mobility Disability**

- If you use a power wheelchair have a lightweight manual chair available as a backup if possible.
- Show others how to assemble, disassemble and operate your wheelchair.
- Purchase an extra battery for a power wheelchair or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices. If you can't purchase an extra battery, find out what agencies, organizations or local charitable groups can help you buy one. Keep extra batteries charged at all times.
- Consider keeping a patch kit or can of sealant for flat tires and/or extra inner tube if wheelchair or scooter is not puncture proof.
- Keep an extra mobility device such as a cane or walker if you use one.
- Keep a portable air pump for wheelchair tires.
- If you use a seat cushion to protect your skin or maintain your balance and you must evacuate, consider keeping an extra cushion on hand.
- Communicate with neighbors who can assist you if you need to evacuate the building.

### **Tips for Individuals with Alzheimer's and Related Dementia**

- Do not leave the person alone. Even those who aren't prone to wandering away may do so in unfamiliar environments or situations.
- If evacuating, help manage the change in environment by bringing a pillow and blanket or other comforting items they can hold onto.
- When at a shelter, try to stay away from exits and choose a quiet corner.
- If there is an episode of agitation, respond to the emotions being expressed. For example, say "You're frightened and want to go home. It's ok. I'm right here with you."

### **Additional Items**

- Several days supply of prescription medicines
- A list of all medications, dosage and any allergies
- Extra eyeglasses, contacts, hearing aids and batteries
- A backup supply of oxygen
- A list of the style and serial number of medical devices (include special instructions for operating your equipment if needed)
- Copies of insurance and Medicare cards
- Contact information for doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt
- Pet food, extra water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other supplies for your service or support animal