

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND MEDICAL CONCERNS

Establish A Personal Support Network

Identify at least 3 people from each location where you regularly spend your time, such as:



Job



Home



School



Volunteer Site



Place of Worship



Where else?

7 Items to Discuss with Your Personal Support Network

1. Make arrangements for network to check in with you immediately after a disaster
2. Exchange important keys (house, car, etc.)
3. Show them where you keep emergency supplies
4. Determine how to contact each other in an emergency
5. Share copies of your emergency documents, evacuation plans, and emergency health info card
6. Always notify each other when you are going out of town and when you will return
7. Learn about each other's needs and how to help each other in an emergency

Traveling

When traveling, identify yourself to registration desk staff as a person who will need assistance in an emergency and state what type of assistance you will need.



Make and Keep with you an Emergency Health Card

- An emergency health card tells rescuers about your needs if you need help.
- Include the following: medications, adaptive equipment, blood type, allergies, insurance numbers, social security number, preferred treatment, contact information for providers, personal support network and emergency contacts.
- Make multiple copies to keep in your car, work, wallet, wheelchair pack, etc.
- Update every six months.

Emergency Contact List

It can be easier to place an out-of-state call from a disaster area than from within. Ask friends or relatives who live out of the area to help organize communication between you and your family.



Besides emergency out-of-town contacts, include your personal support network, equipment vendors, doctors, utility companies, employers, schools, and day care centers.

Emergency Documents

Keep these in a sealed freezer bag in all of your emergency supply kits:

- Health card
- Birth, marriage and death certificates
- Wills
- Deeds
- Family social security numbers
- Charge and bank accounts
- Insurance documentation

Communication: Practice Assertiveness Skills

Be prepared to give clear, specific, and concise instructions and directions: "Take my oxygen tank," "Take my wheelchair," "Take my gamma globulin from the freezer," etc.

Be prepared to request special accommodation from disaster personnel.



Carry these Supplies with You at All Times:

- Emergency Health Card
- Instructions on personal assistance needs and how best to provide them
- Copy of emergency documents
- Flashlight on key ring
- Medicine/copies of prescriptions (at least 1 week's supply)
- Signaling device (whistle, bell, etc.)
- Small battery operated radio and extra batteries

Do not expect shelters or first aid stations to meet your supplies needs.

Plan for enough disability-related supplies to last for up to two weeks.



Medicine

Maintain a 7 to 14 day supply of essential medicine. Work with your doctor to obtain extra medicine and ask how to store them.

Conduct an Ability Self-Assessment

Evaluate your capabilities, limitations, and needs to determine what type of help you will need.

1. Will you be able to independently shut off utilities (gas, water, electricity)?
2. Can you operate a fire extinguisher?
3. Will you be able to carry your evacuation kit?
4. Have you moved or secured large objects that might block your escape path?
5. Write instructions for the following and keep a copy with you and share a copy with your personal support network:
 - a. How to turn off utilities (color-code or label them for quick identification)
 - b. How to operate and safely move your essential equipment. Attach instructions to your equipment
 - c. How to provide personal assistance services
 - d. How to evacuate



Emergency Preparedness Checklist

- Establish a **personal support network**
- Make an **emergency health card**
- Make an **emergency contact list**
- Collect copies of your **emergency documents**.
- Store supplies of all essential documents in your wallet, purse, supply kits and safe deposit box. Give copies to personal support network and out-of-area contact.
- Conduct an **ability self-assessment**
- Collect "**carry-with-you supplies**" at all times
- Compile **disability-related supplies** for emergency kits
- Maintain a seven day supply of **essential medicines**
- Keep **important equipment and assistive devices** in convenient and secured places
- Write out instructions for items you will need help with in an emergency