



Planning for Medical Needs in an Emergency

The first step is to consider how an emergency might affect your individual needs. Plan to make it on your own, for a minimum of three days. It is possible that you will not have access to disaster assistance, a medical facility or even a drugstore. It is crucial that you and your family think about what kinds of resources you use on a daily basis and what you might do if those resources are limited or not available.

Have a contingency plan in place for medicines, medical equipment and other adaptive equipment. Know how to access back-up power for essential medical equipment, have manual adaptive equipment available if needed, and consider how you will alert others for assistance in an emergency.

- If you take medicine or use medical supplies on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week. You should also keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as dosage or treatment information. If it is not possible to have a week-long supply of medicines and supplies, keep as much as possible on hand and talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you should do to prepare.
- If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital or if you receive regular services at home such as home health care, meals, oxygen or door-to-door transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans. Work with them to identify back-up service providers within your area and the areas you might evacuate to.
- If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity to operate, talk to your health care provider about what you can do to prepare for its use during a power outage.

Depending on your needs, items you may need include:

- Extra eyeglasses, hearing aids if you have them, or have coverage for them
- Extra batteries for hearing aids
- Battery chargers for, motorized wheelchairs or other battery-operated medical or assistive technology devices
- Copies of medical prescriptions, doctors' orders, and the style and serial numbers of the support devices you use
- Medical alert tags or bracelets or written descriptions of your disability and support needs, in case you are unable to describe the situation in an emergency
- Supplies for your service animal
- Medical insurance and/or Medicare/Medicaid cards
- Physician contact information
- List of your allergies and health history
- A list of the local non-profit or community based organizations that know you or assist people with access and functional needs similar to yours.
- A laminated personal communication board, if you might need assistance with being understood or understanding others
- If possible, extra oxygen, insulin, catheters, or other medical supplies you use regularly
- If you use a motorized wheelchair, have a light weight manual chair available for emergencies.
- Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.
- Even if you do not use a computer yourself, consider putting important information onto a portable thumb drive for easy transport in an evacuation.

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