

Important Food Storage Information

Food storage is considered part of being prepared for emergencies and natural disasters. The amount of food you store depends on a number of factors - the number of people in your household, their specific preferences, special health conditions, the resources you have in the emergency condition to prepare food, and the amount of space you have for storage.

Your Every Home Ready kit provides emergency food to last 3 days. In the event of an evacuation, it may be your only food. However, if you are able to stay home, you will be able to eat food from your food storage as well.

For extended periods of time, particularly in areas where power outages can last days or weeks, it is very reasonable to have a two week supply of food. The kinds of food your should store for a few days or weeks, are very much the same, but remember, if your are isolated for a longer period of time, pay attention to nutrition to maintain strength and health.

Include a selection of the following foods and items in your food storage:

(pay attention to dates on food and make sure to rotate for freshness)

- Ready to eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables (be sure to store a manual can opener!)
- Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water)
- Staples, including sugar, salt, pepper
- High energy foods i.e. peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix.
- Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets (diabetics, allergies, etc)
- Comfort/stress foods - cookies, hard candy, personal favorites dated for safety.
- Manual can opener
- Disposable plates, cups and utensils, stored easily in Ziploc plastic bags

Important information about canned foods:

- Commercially canned foods are an excellent choice for emergency food storage. They are simple - open and eat.
- For best quality, store your canned food in a cool, dry location. They may last 2 years or longer.
- Cans should be inspected periodically for safety. Check for rust, leaks, bulges or large dents. (large dents can break the seal and it may not be obvious) If any can shows these signs, do **not** use.
- Cleaning sealed cans after a flood: (discard **all** foods in glass jars)
 - 1) mark contents on the CAN with a permanent ink pen.
 - 2) remove paper labels (they can harbor bacteria)
 - 3) wash cans in strong soap or detergent with a scrub brush. Carefully clean the areas around lids and seams
 - 4) soak cans in a solution of 2 tablespoons chorine bleach to each gallon of water for 15 minutes, then allow to air dry before opening (with a sanitized can opener!)

If the electricity goes off....

- Use the perishable food and foods from the refrigerator first, **then** from the freezer.
- Consume food from freezer only if there are ice crystals remaining or if temperature has remained below 40 degrees.
- For emergency cooking, you can use a fire, charcoal grill or camp stove **outdoors only**.

Other Food Storage Information

- Ready to eat meals from military and camping supply stores. They require little or no preparation and are easily stored for an emergency.
- Dehydrated or freeze-dried foods are good choices, but may require extra water to prepare.
- Foods can develop off odors, flavor or appearance, which can be caused by bacteria. If food develops any of these characteristics, **do not use it**, regardless of the date on the package.



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