

Disaster Tips for People With Special Medical Needs

In a disaster, people with special medical needs have extra concerns. This information will help you and your family prepare for an emergency.

MEDICATIONS

- ❖ Always have at least a three-day supply of all your medications. In some emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, you may need to prepare for a week or more.
- ❖ Store your medications in one location in their original containers.
- ❖ Have a list of all of your medications: name of medication, dose, frequency, and the name of the prescribing doctor.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

- ❖ Have an extra three-day supply of any medical supplies you use, such as bandages, ostomy bags or syringes.

ELECTRICALLY POWERED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

- ❖ For all medical equipment requiring electrical power — beds, breathing equipment, or infusion pumps—check with your medical supply company and get information regarding a back-up power source such as a battery or generator.

OXYGEN AND BREATHING EQUIPMENT

- ❖ If you use oxygen, have an emergency supply (enough for at least a three-day period).
- ❖ Oxygen tanks should be securely braced so they do not fall over. Call your medical supply company regarding bracing instructions.
- ❖ If you use breathing equipment, have a three-day supply or more of tubing, solutions and medications.

INTRAVENOUS (IV) & FEEDING TUBE EQUIPMENT

- ❖ Know if your infusion pump has battery back-up, and how long it would last in an emergency.
- ❖ Ask your home care provider about manual infusion techniques in case of a power outage.
- ❖ Have written operating instructions attached to all equipment.

EMERGENCY BAG

- ❖ In the event that you have to leave your home, have a bag packed at all times that contains:
 - A medication list.
 - Medical supplies for at least three days.
 - Copies of vital medical papers such as insurance cards and power of attorney.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

- ❖ An important part of being prepared for a disaster is planning with family, friends and neighbors. Know who could walk to your home to assist you if no other means of transportation is available.
- ❖ Discuss your disaster plans with your home health care provider.
- ❖ Ask your local fire department if they keep a list of people with special medical needs; ask to be included if they do maintain a list.
- ❖ Keep a phone contact list handy of people who can help.

(Developed by: The Independent Living Resources Center
San Francisco, CA)



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