

CREATING A MEDICATION DISASTER PLAN

Simple Tips for Planning Ahead

Remembering the destruction of recent disasters, it is important to review your emergency preparedness plans. While people make their plans, they sometimes forget about their prescription medications.

A disaster can strike at any time and without warning. By preparing in advance, you can help make sure you'll have the medications you need and one less thing to worry about in an emergency.

Some simple tips for a Medication, health conditions and allergy list:

- Make a handwritten (preferably typewritten) list and keep it in your wallet along.
- Keep a waterproof bag or container in your emergency kit
- If possible, stick your prescription labels onto a sheet of paper so all your dosing information is shown. You should also keep the list on your smartphone, in the Notes section or an application designed for such purposes. Make sure you list the drug name, strength (for example, 500 mg), dosage form (tablet, capsule or liquid) and directions for use for each medication you take.

Remember when the power goes out, pharmacies cannot access your medication profile on the computer. Your list allows rescuers, new pharmacists or paramedics to give you some pills or shots when you are without access to your normal drug regimen. Make sure you keep it updated. If you require inhalers to breath, keep a backup in an emergency kit. If you have medications on Medicare you can access your medications in a disaster at:

<https://www.medicare.gov/what-medicare-covers/prescriptions-in-disaster-or-emergency.html>.

- **Keep your medications together:** Keep medications in original containers with original labels and place prescription bottles in a waterproof bag or container so you can grab them quickly and take them with you if you need to evacuate.
- **Carry your prescription card:** Keep your health insurance or prescription –drug benefit card with you at all times, as your pharmacy benefit provider or health plan can help you obtain an emergency supply of any lost or damaged medication.
- **Order early:** Don't wait until you're almost out of medication to order more. Be sure to keep an adequate supply on hand. If a disaster forces you to leave your home, you'll need to take at least three days' worth of medication and supplies with you.
- **Prepare for special needs:** If your medication requires refrigeration or electronic equipment (such as a nebulizer), have a plan for temporary storage and administration.
- **Medication safety:** Inspect your medication to see if the look or the smell of it has changed, as excessive moisture or heat can contaminate the drugs. If you are unsure about its safety, contact a local pharmacist or healthcare provider.
- **Skipping doses:** If you have not been able to take your medication, contact a pharmacist or a doctor as soon as possible even if you are not experiencing any negative health effects. Never take additional doses to make up for those that you have missed before talking to a healthcare practitioner.
- **Children:** If you have a child who takes prescription medications on a regular basis, it is a good idea to speak with your child's daycare center or school about their plan for dealing with your child's medication and medication needs in an emergency.