

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

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www.myositisNW.org www.disasterprep4disabled.com

We all live in parts of the country where natural disasters or man-made emergency situations, such as a house fire, are possible. Our unique limitations may prevent our not moving as fast or as easily as others, or we may have other special medical or physical needs. We do not need to live in fear and we may never have to face a house fire, natural disaster or find ourselves in an emergency situation. We must therefore always be prepared at home, at work, and even while away from home for any type of emergency.

Getting prepared can be a simple process or become more involved, Whatever you do, DO IT NOW!

Begin immediately . . .

- Educate yourself and others about your dangers in your area, don't forget your home
- Evaluate your special needs for specific emergencies
- Communicate your needs to people you know and trust

Continue your plan and . . .

- Create a support group just for disaster situations
- Outline, in writing, a specific plan
- Make your surroundings a safer place to live
- Prepare basic preparations at home and at work
- Put together Emergency and Evacuation Kits

Use the following guidelines and write up your plan

- Develop a support group and list of several friends, family members and close neighbors that would be available to help & know about your particular situation
- Use your evaluation & talk to those who can help you carry out your plan
- Don't forget to talk to your local Fire and Police Department about your needs
- Line up the type of assistance will you need and who will assist you. Designate someone specifically that lives nearby to check on you in an emergency
- Have lists available for your support group with your emergency contacts, special needs, medications and specific instructions on what to do
- Designate one out-of-state contact to check in with after an emergency, often local phone lines will be busy
- Decide and practice how to best exit your house in an emergency
- Research where to go if you need to leave home
- Make lists of all the basic and specialty supplies will you need – see attached
- Make needed safety changes in your home or surroundings
 - Put smoke detectors in each bedroom and one more on each floor of your home
 - Replace batteries & check 2x a year to make sure they are working
 - Have an escape ladder in your bedroom if you live on an upper floor
 - Place fire extinguishers in the kitchen, utility room, garage and car
 - Learn how to use fire extinguisher or teach someone in your home
 - Purchase a smoke hood to have near your bed
 - Design and post a written evacuation plan for your home
 - Have practice drills with your family or friends
 - Mark exits, supplies and utilities on the plan
 - Have gas turn-off wrench available if needed
 - Learn how to turn-off all utilities or show a house member or neighbor

Other Safety Tips

- Make sure you have homeowner's or renter's insurance that covers your needs
- Install handrails and skid strips on outdoor stairs
- Install good lighting outdoors, sensor lights are best
- Fasten down or move all loose rugs throughout house
- Install grab bars in or near the tub, toilet and shower
- Use a safety floor mat in the shower or tub
- Take a cell phone into the bathroom when you bathe or shower
- Keep hallways and exits clear of debris or furniture
- Install night lights or proper lighting in dark areas and in hallways
- Secure hanging items in hallways
- Move heavy object or photos, mirrors etc. away from head of bed
- Secure furniture against walls
- Never leave burning candles, check all burners before retiring or leaving
- Install dead bolt locks and door peep holes in all exterior doors

EVACUATION

If you cannot safely stay at home before, during or after a disaster – you may need to find shelter somewhere else. This could be a hotel, friend or family member not affected by the situation or it could mean you may need to go to a shelter. This can be a very scary time especially for someone with special needs. You need to plan for additional supplies to make your stay away from home a safe and comfortable one. If you live in an area where severe storms or earthquakes may require you to evacuate to a shelter, you need to research your area for possible shelter locations that provide for special needs. Contact your local Red Cross or your area Emergency Management Center. A simple light weight Personal Evacuation Kit could make you more comfortable in any emergency. Items can be added to or left out based on your needs and weather conditions. Assemble a kit & place in an easily accessible place, in an entry closet or under your bed, along with a pair of walking shoes & hooded jacket.

Personal Evacuation Kit

(Store in One large Plastic zippered bag or backpack, labeled with your name)

- 1-2 large plastic zip bags and a plastic straw rolled and put in bottom of bag
This can be blown up and used for a pillow or for garbage, or other storage needs
- Plastic weekly pill container with one weeks supply of pills
- List of all medications, doses and schedules
- Photo ID (make copy), make a list of important policy & account numbers (insurance)
- List of emergency contacts, allergies, special conditions & care instructions
- Money and change, bank cards may not work or be available to use
- Mini first aid kit – (band aid's, alcohol pads, antibiotic cream, antacid, anti-diarrhea, pain relievers, itch cream, gloves, face mask - store in clear zip bag, marked 1st Aid
- Mini flashlight – check batteries every few months
- Small AM/FM radio
- Whistle or signaling devise
- Keychain w/ extra set of house & car keys
- Note pad & pen
- Bandana
- Space blanket
- Disposable rain poncho or rain gear
- Water or energy drink in plastic bottle
- Energy bars and/or hard candy
- Tissues
- Wet wipes
- Waterless hand cleaner
- Comb
- Lotion
- Sunscreen
- Bug repellent
- Small nail clippers w/file
- Travel toothbrush/toothpaste
- Lip balm w/sunscreen
- Floss or tooth picks
- Mirror
- Thin underwear pads
- Ear plugs
- Collapsible cup
- Instant hand warmers

Other items to take with you or to the shelter (if you can)

- Change of clothes for weather conditions
- Folding chair or chaise lounge
- Blow up pillow or air mattress
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Pillows
- Cooler with drinks & food
- Playing cards, Books, Games, Electronic games, Portable music with headset
- Cell Phone
- Toilet paper
- Photos of family

AT HOME

You may need to shelter-in at home. Often during emergencies services such as power, water & sewer may be out, also phone communication. Cell phones may work.

Basic Supplies - Have available & accessible at all times

- Food & water for one week – See attached lists
- Flash lights (working ones by your bed and one in the car)
- Radio (Best if weather band radio)
- Extra batteries
- Sturdy walking shoes under your bed, in the car or at work
- A Basic First Aid Kit at home and in the car - See attached
- An extra 3-5 day supply of medications in a pill dispenser
- A list of your medications, the dosages & times to take
- Extra cash & change, copy of your Personal Identification
- An extra set of car and house keys
- Whistle or signaling device or cell phone (keep it near you)
- Special dietary needs, medical supplies or assistive devices
- Blankets and/or sleeping bags
- Weather appropriate clothing
- Fire extinguisher
- Utility or Swiss-army knife

Special needs – these are very important to think about and have ready at all times

- Medicines 3-5 day supply in a plastic weekly pill holder, ask your DR to prescribe extra prescription amounts for your kit, as insurance may not cover any extras
- Written instructions for Rx name, description (pill # and color), dosage & time taken
- Extra eye glasses & case
- Denture needs
- Extra hearing aid batteries
- Mobility aides-cane, walker, reachers, wheelchair & supplies, (keep power chairs charged)
- Oxygen, special medical supplies, battery chargers for medical equipment
- Evacuation seat if in wheelchair, safety ladder if somewhat mobile & have upper floors
- Back up generator if life dependent on medical equipment
- Special padding & cushioning
- Portable urinal & wipes, Incontinence supplies
- Special needs foods for swallowing, Tracheotomy supplies
- Service animal supplies (food, dishes, leashes, etc.)

Basic Food and Water Supplies – Check List for Use at Home

Water

Three-day supply of water: Store in non breakable plastic containers.
(2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for food preparation & sanitation)

- 1 gallon per person, per day

Food

Three-day to a week supply of non-perishable food: Choose foods you & your family like, are easy to fix with little water, preparation or heating. Plan & write out a detailed 3-5 day menu & purchase according to your menu plans. This makes it easy to decide what to eat. Rotate & replace foods when eaten.

- Ready to eat canned meats & fish Canned fruits, beans and vegetables
- Canned or boxed milk Powdered Milk Canned, boxed, bottled juices
- Instant coffee, tea, cider & cocoa mix High energy snack bars & trail mix
- Crackers Instant rice or fast cooking grains Dried fruits & nuts
- Cold cereal & granola Instant oatmeal Comfort or stress foods
- Ready to eat high calorie meals (corned beef hash, pasta meals, chili, beans, and soup)
- Infant food Food for special dietary needs, vitamins Pet food

Meal Preparation

- Canned fuel (Sterno, propane) or camp stove - If heating food (no charcoal indoors)
- Matches
- Knife & cutting board
- Small scissors
- Non-electric can & bottle opener
- Paper plates, cups, foam cups, napkins & plastic utensils, Lg. spoon & tongs
- Drinking straws
- Paper towels, foil &/or plastic wrap
- Re-sealable food storage bags
- Pot holder

Sanitation

- Plastic bucket with tight lid, camp toilet or port-a-potty (Store all items in bucket)
- Disinfectant, liquid detergent, bleach and medicine dropper for measuring bleach
- Pre-moistened disinfectant wipes
- Plastic garbage bags and ties (large and small zippered bags)
- Toilet paper, paper towels
- Pre-moistened wipes & waterless hand cleaner
- Feminine and personal hygiene items
- Face masks & vinyl gloves (N95 for flu protection and dust particulate)

Tools for Clean-up and Repairs

- Shut-off wrench for gas & water
- Pliers, pry bar, hammer and nails, utility knife or multi-use tool
- Plastic sheeting, duct tape
- Rope, twine &/or bungee cords
- Work gloves and work boots
- Safety goggles and dust mask
- Broom, dustpan and shovel
- Garbage bags & ties

Shelter & Protection

- Tent, plastic ground cover, rope & stakes
- Sleeping bags or blankets, one per person
- Rain gear, thermal underwear, warm hat & gloves (as needed for weather conditions)
- Sunglasses, sun hat and sunscreen (as needed for weather conditions)
- Clothing, sturdy shoes, warm jackets, (hooded sweatshirts great)
- Cots, pads, lawn chairs or loungers
- Helmet or hard hat advisable if live in earthquake area

First Aid Supplies

- First Aid Book
- Basic First Aid Kit - Have ready at all times, one (well stocked) for home, one for cars

Store in Light Weight Waterproof Container (Plastic Food Container, Plastic Tool Box)

- Assorted sizes sterile band-aids
- Triple antibiotic ointment
- 4-6 each of 2" and 4" sterile gauze pads
- 3 rolls each of 2" and 3" sterile roller bandages
- First aid tape
- 2 pair latex gloves
- Cleansing antiseptic, alcohol prep pads, hydrogen peroxide or soap
- Pre-moistened wipes
- Scissors, tweezers, (matches to sterilize)
- Needle and assorted safety pins
- Eye pad and sterile eye wash, eye drops
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades
- Tube of petroleum jelly or lubricant
- Triangular bandage (bandana works fine)
- Ace bandage
- Non prescription drugs
- Aspirin and non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacids
- Laxative
- Cold and cough tablets (antihistamine & decongestant)
- Syrup of Ipecac and Activated charcoal (for poisoning use- if advised by Poison Control Center)

Other Sites

There are many great websites dealing with getting yourself, your family, your home and your car prepared in case of an emergency. I have put together and am still working on a specific website for this purpose. **Emergency Preparedness for the Physically Challenged**
www.disasterprep4disabled.com

Find Your STATE'S Emergency Management Website

www.emergencymanagement.com/state-em.html

Storm Watch

www.weather.com/stormwatch/index.html

American Red Cross - Tips for Seniors & People with Disabilities

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/disability.html

Salvation Army

www.salvationarmyusa.org

Community Preparedness Website Project (Special needs populations)

<http://www.preparenow.org/prepare.html>

US Department of Transportation

www.dotcr.ost.dot.gov/asp/emergencyprep.asp

Disability Preparedness Resource Center

www.disabilitypreparedness.gov

US Geological Society Preparedness & Response

www.earthquake.usgs.gov/learning/preparedness.php

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

www.fema.gov

Heat Wave Awareness Project

www.isse.ucar.edu/heat/index.html

Dept of Homeland Security- Natural Hazards

www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/bem/NaturalHazards/index.html

National Fire Protection Agency

www.nfpa.org/index

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)

www.nvoad.org

US Fire Administration - Dept Homeland Security

www.usfa.dhs.gov/index.shtm

Other:

LoveHandles™ - Portable, Assistive Chair Lift for transfers, evacuation and travel

www.redbarn-enter.com

Earthquake Preparation Supplies - Quake Hold

www.quakehold.com

Safe America - Smoke Hoods & Other Fire Evacuation Equipment

www.saferamerica.com

Home Safe Home® - The Safety Zone® / Safety Supplies

www.safetyzone.com

Medic Alert - Pendants & Medical Emergency Information Center

www.medicalert.com

AOK Rescue Chair – High rise & work evacuation chair

www.rescuechair.com

Life Alert® Medical Emergency Response

www.lifealert.com