



Developed by a group of health care professionals through a grant from the American Red Cross Northern California Disaster Preparedness Network

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# **Disaster Tips for People with Medical Needs**

**In preparing for a disaster, such as an earthquake, storm, or power outage, people with special medical needs have extra concerns. This information will help you and your family prepare for a disaster.**

## **Medications**

- Always have at least a three day supply of all your medications.
- 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, medications, etc.

## **Intravenous (IV) and 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, power of attorney, etc.

## **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 other means of transportation are unavailable.
- 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 list handy of people who can help and their phone numbers.