

## Emergency Preparedness -- Medical-1

**Summary:** This section addresses –

- Retaining normal health under abnormal conditions,
- Preparing for injury or illness, and
- Additional sources of critical information.

The material that follows primarily addresses narrowly defined medical issues. For other important aspects of health and wellness preparation, be sure to review:

- Sanitation-1 ([Click Here](#)) Essential sanitary practices for personal and community health.
- Water-1 ([Click Here](#)) Provide clean water to avoid dehydration and disease.
- Power-1, -2 (in prep) Heating, cooling, lighting, and medical accessory use in an outage.
- Identity-1 (in prep) for record keeping advice.

**Remaining “Healthy”** – without your usual support

How do you maintain your health every day when you lack access to basic utilities and supplies? Review your routine and requirements carefully.

An emergency can make it difficult – or impossible – to refill your prescriptions. Organize and protect your prescription and over-the-counter drugs and supplements to prepare for an emergency. Keep at least a 2-week supply of all medications, stored so that you can quickly and easily add them to your go-bag if you have to evacuate.

- Prescription and insurance regulations complicate this. See Medical-2 (in prep).
- Rotate your stock to minimize the potential effects of expiration.
- See Power-2 (in prep) for suggestions about refrigeration issues.
- Don't forget non-drug essentials: hypodermics, swabs, hearing aid batteries, etc.

### First Aid

Medical-2 (in prep) contains a list of suggested first aid supplies. Some useful suggestions for general supplies include:

- Large bandage material (tape, gauze, band-aids) can be made smaller if you have scissors (those on a pocket knife will do). Small bandages can't be enlarged.
- Adhesive bandages should be large, waterproof or heavy-duty, and designed to completely cover and surround the wound (e.g: Nexcare waterproof bandages).

- Do not forget personal protective equipment such as eye protection, surgical and work gloves, and N95 masks – disasters cause fire, smoke and dust.

Remember that your (or your partner's) specific condition(s) may dictate special considerations. Blood thinners dictate preparation for copious bleeding, diabetes means a need for careful wound infection control, and allergies may require topical, oral, or inhaled medications. Consult your provider about your conditions that might require specific emergency supplies.

### **Illness or Injury** in a disaster -- when more than First Aid is needed

In a widespread regional emergency, hospital transfers for emergency care may not be available. You may be assisted, evacuated or treated by people who do not know you, do not have access to your records, and may have limited medical training or experience. They will need information to help effectively.

- Your condition – Primary information : diseases, conditions, abnormalities, implants, etc.. Secondary: contact information for your medical providers.
- Your needs – Primary information: List of medications and doses, by common or brand name. Regular treatments or therapies. Secondary information: prescription numbers, pharmacy and contact info, technical name; providers.

### **Making Information Useful**

- Have both primary and secondary information printed out. Put waterproofed copies (Ziploc bags or laminated) in your go-bags, perhaps in your car.
- Prominently post all the information at home – with or near your POLST (Oregon Portable Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form is probably a good place, as well as in your personal record file.
- If possible, print the most critical primary information on a card or piece of paper that you can laminate or cling-wrap and carry in your wallet, along with your ID.
- In an evacuation, couples should also carry a copy of the partner's information.
- Friends or relatives who are emergency contacts should also have copies.

Other approaches: information sources such as computer-readable chips or drives, cloud storage, etc. can also be considered, but it is unlikely that responders in a major emergency would be able to use this technology effectively. Traditional bracelets or necklaces would be more useful basic information about a few conditions.

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