



Medical & Health



Being prepared for emergencies also means having those basic medical and health items on hand to keep you healthy and as comfortable as possible. Being sick or injured or even not as clean as we would like, can seriously impact our personal safety and well being.

First Aid/Medical Kit

The preparedness kit should include medical care items that will be useful to treat mild injuries as well as to alleviate pain and discomfort. Bandages, slings, wound cover, tape, and other first aid items are necessary to deal with minor to moderate injuries. Include a basic first aid guide as well. It is appropriate to include a selection of over the counter medicines to deal with pain relief, infection control, and digestive problems.

Remember, space will be at a premium so choose your medical supplies and container carefully. Commercial first aid kits are often bulky and in hard cover cases. Consider a soft bag kit, and build up the contents from your own medicine cabinet. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for recommended items.

Prescription Items

Remember to include a supply of prescription medicines and drugs that will be needed for each member of the family. Also, include any devices needed to monitor physical conditions, and instruments needed to inject medicines. An extra pair of prescription glasses is an essential item to also be included in the kit.



Hygiene Kit

Each individual kit should include personal hygiene items such as soap, toilet paper, tooth paste, toothbrush, comb/brush, antibacterial wipes, deodorant, sanitary napkins, and talcum powder. Additional recommended hygiene items will include facial tissue, nail clippers, wash cloth, and a safety razor.

Health Comfort

Other highly recommended items to include that are health and comfort related will include extra sunglasses, a handkerchief or bandana, sunscreen, skin lotion, ear plugs, and lip balm.

Pet Supplies



It will help you and your pet if some effort has been taken to prepare it in case of emergency. Pets can suffer from stress, just like humans, so including both essential life support items (food, water, medicines) as well as comfort items will greatly enhance the quality of your dogs experience during an emergency.

Food & Water

Consider the family pet's food and water needs when planning out the preparedness kit. Check with your local veterinarian about how much food and water your animal will require for at least 72 hours. Remember to include a small water bowl for their use.

Restraint Device

Include a spare collar and sturdy lead or pet carrier as appropriate within your kit or with your preparedness supplies. Having it readily available will reduce the chances of you forgetting to grab a restraint device/carrier when evacuating quickly.

Pet Meds

If your pet has an illness, is taking prescribed medications or gets anxious, include a suitable supply of medicines in the preparedness kit. It is also a good idea to include some sanitized pet wipes, baggies for debris, and scissors.

Toys,

If your pet has a favorite type of toy, include it in the kit.

Basic Preparedness Items

Life Support Items

Two primary concerns for people who are displaced or otherwise involved in an emergency situation are water and food. Drinking sufficient water is essential to staying alive, and even temporary restrictions in adequate water intake can have serious medical consequences. The other critical component, food, is needed to keep your body functioning, providing energy to move and perform work, and to keep you comfortable.



Water

It is recommended that each individual consume a minimum of one (1) gallon of potable water per day. This water should be stored in clean, leak resistant and re-sealable containers. Stored water should be rotated every six months to ensure freshness.

There are various methods available for purifying water. It would be appropriate to look at some of these methods, but in any situation boiling water for several minutes (the duration will be dependent on the source of the water and your altitude) should provide an adequate level of protection.

Food



Select foods that are nutritious, readily digested, tasty, and easy to prepare and serve. Stored food should be properly sealed, possess a shelf life of at least 6 months, be opened and if necessary resealed easily, and compact enough to be portable. Avoid foods that require substantial cooking or preparation, or that require significant water for processing or digestion.

Remember any special dietary restrictions (diabetic, hypertension, allergies) and stock your food supplies accordingly. If possible, test a sample version of your food selection before including it in your kit to deter-

Shelter & Protection



Staying dry and protected from the elements can mean the difference between life and death, and at least relative comfort and agony. Body heat can be lost very rapidly, even during warm weather if you get wet.

Also, being properly clothed will help you to not only stay warm but help you avoid minor injuries and hazardous exposures.



Blanket

Staying warm is both a survival issue as well as one of general comfort. Your kit should include some form of material for keeping in body warmth – Either a small woolen blanket or pre-packaged, commercially available aluminized wrap will provide some level of protection from the cold and limit exposure to the weather.

Clothing

Include a set of spare clothing that includes head cover (cap or hat), light jacket or sweater, long sleeved cotton shirt, cotton trousers, appropriate under garments, socks, and a pair of sturdy boots or shoes. If space is an issue, consider a two piece all-cotton sweat suit or similar combination garment that is easily packaged. Avoid synthetic fabrics as they will not insulate or resist wear as well as natural fabrics. Finally, sizes change, so be sure to check the fit of your extra clothes from time to time to make sure they are still comfortable.

Rainwear/Poncho

Having a small rain suit or light poncho can mean the difference between being warm and dry or wet and cold. Hypothermia can set in quickly once the body becomes wet and chilled.

Tent/Tarp/Shelter

Consider including a small tube tent in your kit just in case you need to set up shelter outside. A simple plastic tarp will also serve as an expedient shelter against rain, wind, and the bright sun, as well as a ground cover.

Utility Gloves

Include a pair of leather work gloves to protect your hands when moving debris or handling sharp items.



Tools & Utility



The following represents a list of assorted items that are recommended to be carried in your preparedness kit or stored with your emergency supplies. Some items, like a flashlight and knife are indispensable and should be considered as essential supplies.



Flashlight

Every kit should include a water resistant, moderate intensity, battery powered flashlight with extra bulbs and batteries. It is also advisable to include some chemically-activated, one time light sticks that are great for providing non-electrical illumination.

Knife/Multi-Tool

A sturdy pocket or sheathed knife, with one or more blades is an essential component to any preparedness kit. If available, a multi-tool is a nice addition to a preparedness kit as it may offer additional tool options not contained in a standard knife.

Bags

A selection of various sized plastic bags has a multitude of uses including storage and even protection (trash bags).

Fire Starter & Candles

It may be necessary to light a candle or otherwise have need for open flame. A small fuel canister type lighter and/or a box of waterproof strike-anywhere matches can come in very handy when an open flame is required. Small candles are an excellent back up source for light if used carefully.

Food Preparation/Utensils

The inclusion of eating utensils will generally be based upon what types of foods are contained within your kit or stored supply cache. Generally, a fork, knife and spoon are good basics. You may also want to include a collapsible cup, can/bottle opener, and aluminum foil.

Mirror

Include a small glass mirror that may be used as signal device; to focus light for heat; and if necessary may be carefully broken and the shards used as cutting instruments.

Tape

Include a roll of duct tape to wrap and secure items.

Whistle

A small whistle can be used to signal for help or send audible directions.



Reference & Support Items

If you are forced to leave your home or workplace, or are relocated to a shelter for an extended period of time, having a collection of essential personal documents and critical information will prove invaluable. Reference information will be of great value and help you to sort out all of the essential details of your condition



Vital Reference Materials

Include a list of important contact information; a list of critical financial numbers; information on your health and medical condition; copy of essential documents; and a current photograph of each family member.

Money

Include some cash, your checkbook (individual checks) and an extra credit card in the kit. You will probably have some expenses and getting to your bank may be difficult.

Portable Radio

Look at including a portable, battery-powered AM/FM radio within your preparedness kit or cache. Being able to receive official news and information will keep you informed and help to reduce the stress of not knowing what is happening around you.

Maps

Include maps of your local area and region in case you need to travel.

Notepad and Writing Implements

Your kit should include a small notepad and several pencils and pens. A marker is also good to have when leaving messages on non-paper surfaces.



Morale & Comfort Items



Reading Material

It would be good to include some form of favorite reading material or other self-contained activity to pass away the time or to provide spiritual or emotional comfort during an emergency.