

Know What To Do:

For the Mature Individual



If you are over 50, or if you have friends or family over 50 years old, then this is for you!

Each person's needs and abilities are unique, but every individual can take important steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies and put plans in place. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan, you can be better prepared for any situation. Now that you are reaching maturity, your emergency planning needs to take into account your age.

- ✓ Consider how a disaster might affect your individual needs.
- ✓ Plan to make it on your own, at least for a time. It's possible that you will not have access to a medical facility or even a drugstore for an extended period.
- ✓ Identify what type of resources (supplies, equipment, medication) you use on a daily basis and what you might do if they are limited or unavailable.
- ✓ Make an emergency supply kit. (see our Disaster Kit link)
- ✓ If you must evacuate your home, take your pets with you if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that animals may not be allowed. Check out our web page about animals in disasters.
- ✓ Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets; consider loved ones or friends outside of your immediate area who would be willing to host you and your pets during an emergency.

Create a Support Network

If you anticipate needing additional assistance during a disaster due to your age, don't be bashful about it! Talk to family, friends and others who will be part of your personal support network. They will help you during an emergency, but you need to ask in advance and work out arrangements before an emergency occurs.

- ✓ Write down and share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your support network.
- ✓ Make sure everyone knows how you plan to evacuate your home or workplace and where you will go in case of a disaster.
- ✓ Make sure that one or two people in your local network have extra keys to your home and know where you keep your emergency supplies.
- ✓ Teach those who will help you how to administer medicine and use any personal care or lifesaving equipment in the event of an emergency.
- ✓ Practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your network.
- ✓ Consider starting a group in your church or community to prepare together and increase your network size.

Additional Supplies and Documents:

Medications and Medical Supplies. If you take medicine or use a medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need to make it on your own for at least a week if not longer.

- ✓ Make a list of prescription medicines including dosage, treatment, and allergy information.
- ✓ Keep your medicine refilled so that you always have a week supply of medicine on hand.
- ✓ Talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you need to prepare.
- ✓ If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital, or if you receive regular services such as home health care, treatment or transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans. Work with them to identify back-up service providers and incorporate them into your personal support network.
- ✓ Consider other personal needs such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries and oxygen.

Emergency Documents. Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kit such as family records, medical records, wills, deeds, social security numbers, charge and bank account information and tax records. Consider developing an Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (see website below):

<http://www.operationhope.org/images/uploads/Files/effak2.pdf> for a copy.

- ✓ Have copies of your medical insurance and Medicare cards readily available.
- ✓ Keep a list of the style and serial number of medical devices or other life-sustaining devices.
- ✓ Include operating information and instructions.
- ✓ Make sure that a friend or family member has copies of these documents.
- ✓ Include the names and contact information of your support network, as well as your medical providers.
- ✓ If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information notes the best way to communicate with you.
- ✓ Keep these documents in a water-proof container for quick and easy access, but make sure they are secure from theft.
- ✓ Make a card with emergency contact telephone numbers to keep in your wallet or purse.