Disaster Tips for People with Special Needs

In a disaster, people with special medical needs have extra concerns. This information will help you and your family prepare for an emergency.

**Medications**

- Always have at least a three-day supply of all your medications. In some emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, you may need to prepare for a week or more.

- 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 and medications.

**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 and power of attorney.

**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 no other means of transportation is available.
- 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 phone contact list handy of people who can help.