



Accredited Health Services Homecare Alert: Plan Ahead For The Next Natural Disaster

In light of the recent destruction caused by Hurricane Irene and Winter Storm Alfred, we felt it important to provide our clients with an emergency "Go Kit" in case they are ever forced to leave their home. This is the time to plan ahead for what you may need to stay safe, healthy, informed, mobile, and independent during a disaster.

Depending on your needs, items for your "Go Kit" may include:

- Extra eyeglasses, hearing aids if you have them, or have coverage for them.
- Battery charger and extra batteries for hearing aids, motorized wheelchairs, or other battery-operated medical devices.
- Copies of medical prescriptions, doctor's orders, devices you use.
- Medical alert tags or bracelets or written descriptions of your disability and support needs.
- Medical insurance cards, Medicare/Medicaid cards, physician contact information, list of your allergies and health history.
- A list of the local non-profit or community-based organizations that know you or assist people with needs similar to yours.
- A list of personal contacts-family and friends-that you may need to contact in an emergency.
- If possible, extra medicine, oxygen, insulin, catheters, or other medical supplies you use regularly.
- If you use a motorized wheelchair, have a light weight manual chair available for emergencies. Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.

Another important thing to keep in mind is to plan to maintain your independence before an emergency strikes. This includes:

- Create a support network to help you plan for an emergency. Consider family, neighbors, friends, people who provide services to you, faith-based and community groups. Tell these people where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Contact your city or county government's emergency information management office and work with them to use their emergency planning resources.
- If you receive dialysis or other life sustaining medical treatment, identify the location and availability of more than one facility and work with your provider to develop your emergency plan.
- Show others how to operate your wheelchair or other assistive devices.
- Keep contact information for local independent living centers and other disability service organizations in a safe and easy-to-access place. If you provide any organization with information about your needs and what you may require in an emergency, keep that data up to date.
- If you use in-home support services, Meals-on-Wheels, Life Alert or other support services, work with them to personalize emergency preparedness plans to meet your needs so you can keep in touch with them during and after an emergency.
- Work with local transportation and disability services to plan ahead for accessible transportation if you need that for evacuation or other reasons during a disaster.
- Develop back-up plans for personal assistance services, hospice, or other forms of in-home help.



The Transition from Natural Independence to Assisted Independence in Your Home



For more information, call 1.877.200.0606 or visit accreditedhs.com