

72 Hour Emergency Kit – Survival

WHY A 72 HOUR EMERGENCY KIT?

When the dam breaks, the chemical spills, the fire rages, the flood threatens, the winds hit, the tornadoes destroy, or the earth trembles you and your family may be faced with evacuating your home. During these and other emergency situations you can expect little or no outside help for the first seventy-two hours.

With the items in this kit, your family's survival will be safer and more comfortable. Some families may need a large container (such as a 32-gallon garbage can) to hold all items. Individual backpacks, duffel bags, suitcases or any other sturdy containers may be used.

This 72 hour kit should meet the needs of your family. Use hobbies and entertainment your family likes to do, ready to eat foods your family enjoys, and individual medications as required by your family members.

EMERGENCY NEEDS

Battery powered radio – Local stations and Emergency Broadcasting System will be the only source of reliable information during an emergency. If the radio isn't used often, it should be checked regularly to make sure both it and the batteries are in working order.

Flashlight – The safest emergency lighting – will not cause fires or sparks – needs to be kept in easily accessible location and checked often.

Extra batteries – Should be stored outside of the radio or flashlight. The shelf life will be extended if the batteries are kept in the refrigerator or freezer.

Sleeping bags and blankets – Although often too bulky to store in 72 hour kit, there should be an adequate number for all members in the family and easily accessible. Wool blankets are excellent because they don't burn readily and keep the user warm even when the blanket is wet. Small "space" or "thermal" blankets take very little room and can easily be carried in the car for emergency uses.

Can opener – manual type to use with canned goods.

Utility knife – should be sharp, versatile variety adaptable for many uses.

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Adjustable wrench – During many emergencies – especially a major earthquake, gas lines may be ruptured. To prevent leakage which might lead to explosions, the main gas valve should be turned off. Turning off the water main increases clean water storage to include the water trapped in the house plumbing.

FOOD

A three day supply that doesn't necessarily need heating or water. Nutrition isn't the big criteria; family's preference, shelf life, durability of container, medical needs, should be the highest consideration.

Some suggestions:

Ready to eat meat in cans

Canned fruit and vegetables – (supply some of daily liquid needs)

Nuts, seeds

Peanut butter

Powdered milk, chocolate mixes, pre-sweetened drink powder (helps keep drinking water palatable)

Canned Juices

Infant care – canned milk, baby food, bottles, nipples

Dried fruit, fruit leather – caution: drink plenty of water

Crackers

Security Foods: Those items that give emotional boost –“a treat” cookies, sweetened cereal, candy, etc.

Water storage – A person needs ½ gallon of liquid per day. This can be in the form of fruit or vegetable juices, milk, etc. as well as water. Boiling the water 10 minutes, adding 10 drops of chlorine bleach per gallon of water or using water purification tablets may be necessary to assure safe drinking water.

SANITATION KIT

Plastic bags and ties – Serves as liner for improvised toilet as well as: garbage containers, ground cloth, tent, broken window cover, raincoat substitute, etc.

Disinfectant – When water is at a premium there must be some method of treating sewage, dishes and refuse to minimize disease and infection.

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Bleach, Lysol, Betadine, etc. -- are among the many choices. Containers should be unbreakable.

Toilet paper, Paper towels, Soap

Feminine hygienic needs

Disposable diapers

Plastic bucket with tightly fitted lids – this serves as toilet facility in connection with:

Improvised toilet seat – this can be a simple padded cardboard covered with plastic wrap or a discarded plastic seat from a regular toilet cover or anything that resembles the above!

Disposable cups, plates, utensils – to conserve water and minimize contamination.

Toiletries – Although not essential for survival, emotionally reassuring – toothbrush and paste, comb and hair brush, deodorant, talc powder, mirror, etc.

FIRST AID KIT AND HEALTH MAINTENANCE

The intent of the items in this kit is to enable a family to treat minor health difficulties and keep injuries from becoming a health threat during the first 72 hours following an emergency. It is assumed (hoped) that medical help will be available from some source by that time.

First Aid Manual

Aspirin or pain relievers

Laxatives – Only those used by the family, tried and found effective should be included.

Rubbing Alcohol – mild disinfectant, soothing muscle rub.

Diarrhea medication – Only those used by the family, tried and found effective should be included.

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Petroleum Jelly – lip balm, skin protection.

Soap – for cleaning around injuries.

Baking soda and salt – ½ tsp. soda and 1 tsp. salt in quart of water to replace body fluids in cases of shock, vomiting, diarrhea.

Gauze – small sterile pads to cover wounds, rolls of non-sterile gauze to cover, secure and protect an injury.

Triangular bandage – 36” x 36” x 52” to immobilize arm and other injuries.

Elastic bandage – use in sprains, securing splints, etc.

Cottonballs and swabs – clean up and disinfect around wounds, and other uses.

Safety pins – securing bandages, etc.

Scissors

Thermometer

Matches

Needle

Tweezers

Sanitary napkins – make a very absorbent pressure dressing.

Disposable diapers – make a very absorbent pressure dressing and for splint padding.

Tape – magazines, wire mesh, cardboard, pillows, Popsicle sticks, other items.

Syrup of Ipecac – causes forceful vomiting, used in cases of poisoning where vomiting is recommended. NOT in cases involving caustic substance or petroleum products.

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Individual Medical Needs – Individuals who rely on daily or periodical medications should include these in the kit. Shelf life should be determined from a doctor or pharmacist and the medications rotated accordingly.

STRESS FACTORS

After the initial response to any emergency the disrupted life style and disorientation will need to be handled. Some items that could be emotionally reassuring: for children – crayons, coloring books, story books, games; for adults – books, games, magazines, needle work, wind up clock, musical instrument such as a guitar, harmonica, recorder, etc.

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