

Is your family prepared for an emergency?

Tornado. Flood. Acts of Violence. Zika or Ebola virus. It seems like we are being affected by disasters of some kind more than ever before. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges citizens to follow key steps to prepare for future emergencies.

1. **Get a kit.** Start building your own disaster supply kit. Include basic items such as food and water, medications, first aid supplies, pet food, and important papers. Keep your kit in a safe location in your home and update it every now and then.
2. **Make a plan.** Families and workplaces should get involved in efforts to prepare a plan of action in the case of different emergencies. Where will you take shelter? How will you make sure everyone who needs to be there is out of harm's way? How will you contact each other?
3. **Know before you go.** Plan for how you will address the 5 P's in case you need to evacuate: People, Prescriptions, Papers, Personal Needs, Priceless Items.
4. **Be proactive!** Before an emergency occurs, learn about what can be helpful when different disasters hit. Do you need the same things for a flood as you would for a tornado? Know the signs of different disasters so in the event of an emergency, you are prepared to act quickly.
5. **Get involved.** Volunteer to support disaster relief efforts in your community, start a preparedness project, or donate money and goods to organizations that assist in these emergency relief efforts.
6. **Prepare Child ID kits.** Email digital photos of all family members to extended relatives and/or friends. Update photos of children every 6 months. Make copies of important documents (e.g. birth certificates) and mail them to a friend or relative, and give your children identification information to carry with them in case of an emergency. If your child has special health care needs, prepare an emergency information form that lists important meds, treatments and care guidelines that may be needed if evacuated or sheltered away from primary caregivers.

You can never fully prepare for everything that might happen, but taking some simple steps ahead of time can make a big difference in your ability to cope and bounce back if a disaster every happens.

Prayer: God, keep us safe and give us the wisdom and strength to prepare for emergencies that may affect our family and our community.

Wishing you joy and good health,
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