

Medications in a Disaster

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How to prepare for medications in a disaster is a common and difficult question to answer. By the nature of disasters, pharmacies and even doctors' offices are likely to be closed. In a major disaster, that could be for quite some time. It is reasonable to hope that within 2 weeks after the start of a disaster emergency medications will be available, at least in urban areas.

List of Medications: Anytime you are away from home you should have with you a list of your medications so that you can get them as soon as available in a disaster aftermath. The list should include:

- Medication Name
- Rx number
- Doctor's name and phone number



Extra Meds: You should always keep at least 2 weeks of medications on hand. Pharmacies can usually dispense prescription meds 10 days before they are due, so by repeating this a few times, you can accumulate extra. Your physicians can also prescribe an extra week or two for you.

Medications in Go Bag: Keep at least one week of the extra in your Go Bag. Remember to rotate the meds so they don't expire. One idea is to exchange each new batch of meds with the ones in the Go Bag use the ones that were there.

Meds Away from Home: What if you are not at home when a disaster strikes? Whether on a trip or just out to the store, you may not be able to get home to your stash of medications. Keeping meds with you is difficult. Keeping them in your vehicle is not always a great idea as they could be stolen or ruined from heat. You must decide how critical your meds are for your survival over the possible two weeks or more before you can get them. Some options for critical meds are:

- Each time you leave home, bring your Go Bag
- Purchase a small 12-volt fridge to keep your meds in when using your vehicle
- Keep a fanny pack or other bag with you with critical meds.



If you have any other ideas or tips, please share them with your neighbors and friends!