

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY

Are you ready for a disaster?

Whether it is a natural disaster, extreme weather, a terrorist event, or another pandemic, it is important to be ready for any emergency. Disasters can happen without warning and threaten lives, especially for those with chronic diseases such as epilepsy. During a disaster, you may face challenges that can affect your transportation, medication, and the support of others, making it harder to manage your seizures. Consider these steps to help you be better prepared.

Prepare an emergency kit and store it in a place easy to get to. Your kit should include:



Medical alert bracelet



Whistle to signal for help



Dust mask to help filter contaminated air



First aid kit with extra anti-seizure medication



Water (one gallon per person per day for at least 3 days)



Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in place



Manual can opener



Local maps



Flashlight and extra batteries



Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery



Battery or hand-crank radio with weather alerts



Food (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food)



Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation

Items to store in a waterproof bag include:



- Your prescription medications
- Your doctor's name, address, and phone numbers.
- List of local pharmacies.
- List of emergency contacts for family and friends; include names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.
- Seizure Action Plan.
- Copies of birth certificates, marriage certificates, identification cards, and credit cards.
- Change of clothing.
- Money.
- Personalized items like eyeglasses, contact lenses, and hearing aid batteries.

Create an emergency plan in case of an evacuation

- ✔ Meet with your family and caregivers to review your emergency plans and make necessary changes.
- ✔ If you do not live at home (e.g., adult day center, assisted living facility, college, etc.), make sure you and your family/caregivers have an emergency preparedness plan with your living facility. Plans must meet your needs, such as wheelchair accessibility. In addition, your family must know where to get information about the facility if a disaster happens.
- ✔ Review your emergency contacts with your family and determine the order of whom to call first, second, etc., during and after an emergency to update them on your current situation. Consider selecting someone who does not live nearby, as the disaster may also affect them.
- ✔ Check with your local 211 to see if they, or another program, are managing a disaster check-in.
- ✔ Know your area's evacuation routes and safe places during an emergency. If evacuated, discuss a location with your loved ones where you can meet during or after an emergency.

You may need additional help in an emergency if you are ...

- >> a child, an older adult, or pregnant
- >> a person with disabilities and/or chronic conditions
- >> a person with limited access to transportation and do not have a car
- >> a person whose English is not your first language
- >> experiencing homelessness or poverty



Learn Seizure First Aid

Encourage your family, loved ones, friends, and neighbors to learn seizure first aid so that they know how to recognize a seizure and provide seizure first aid. **On-Demand and in-person.**

Sign up: learn.epilepsy.com



Contact the Epilepsy & Seizures 24/7 Helpline

The Foundation's 24/7 Helpline connects people with local services and resources, including food banks, shelters, pharmacies, etc. **Interpreters are available in 200 languages.**

**Call: 1.800.332.1000 or
1.866.748.8008 (en español)**

Resources:

- ➔ **American Red Cross** offers information for emergency preparedness and a list of available shelters and resources. [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org).
- ➔ **Ready.gov** provides information about what to do before, during, and after a disaster.
- ➔ The **National Hurricane Center** provides alerts and tips about hurricane preparation. [nhc.noaa.gov](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov).
- ➔ The **Disaster Distress Line** for those experiencing emotional distress related to a disaster. 1-800-985-5990.
- ➔ The **Humane Society of the United States** provides tips on protecting your pets in natural disasters [humanesociety.org](https://www.humanesociety.org).
- ➔ **RxOpen.org** provides information on the operating status of healthcare facilities in affected areas.



People with epilepsy should not make changes to treatment or activities based on this information without first consulting with their healthcare provider. This publication is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$500 with 100% funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government. EFA150 Rev. 09/2022 ©2020 Epilepsy Foundation of America, Inc.