

## **DISASTER PLANNING FOR THOSE WITH CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS**

### **(DIABETES)**

Everyone should plan for natural disasters, but this planning is especially important if you have a chronic health condition such as diabetes. Follow these nine steps to be ready:

**1. Do basic planning.** Plan for where you will go if you must leave home, how you will get there and who will meet you there. Stay current with your vaccinations. Contact your county emergency management office for advice on transportation and other services for people with special needs.

**2. Pack a go-kit.** In a waterproof container, pack first aid supplies including antibiotic cream, flashlight and spare clothes. Include extra socks and shoes, because it's important to keep your feet dry and free of infection. Keep on hand for quick packing a week's worth of medicine plus supplies, medical equipment, spare equipment batteries and cash. If you use insulin, store it in the fridge with an insulated lunch bag nearby, ready to fill and go. Keep your kit by the front door.

**3. Put an information folder in your kit.** This should include contact information for your healthcare professionals, pharmacy and emergency contact person; a list of your medicines, doses and dosing schedules; and the make, model and serial number of any medical device you use in case you need to replace it. Also include copies of recent A1C results or other lab work, your health insurance card and your photo ID.

**4. Include food supplies in your kit.** Pack a three-day supply of water and nonperishable foods that fit with your meal plan. Include snacks to treat low blood sugar.

**5. Wear a medical alert ID.** Ask your healthcare professional about how to get a free tag that states your medical condition. This is important if you need medical care but are not in a condition to talk.

**6. Do kidney care planning.** If you are on dialysis for kidney disease, which often co-occurs with diabetes, talk to your dialysis center about their disaster plans. If you have a home dialysis or peritoneal dialysis machine, plan for how to power it if the electricity is out and how to stop dialysis if you lose power in the middle of a treatment. Register with your water and power companies for priority service restoration. In your information folder, keep a copy of your dialysis treatment plan, the phone numbers of your dialysis center and other nearby centers, and the KCER Helpline – Kidney Community Emergency Response Hotline at (866) 901-3773 or [www.kcercoalition.com](http://www.kcercoalition.com)

Talk with your doctor about what food to pack in your go-kit for an emergency three-day diet. This eating plan can save your life if dialysis treatments are missed or delayed, because it reduces water and waste buildup in your body. Finally, if a disaster is looming, try to get your dialysis treatment ahead of schedule.

**7. Be ready.** Tune in to your local AM Station and listen to weather/incident reports, and listen for what local leaders say about evacuation. Keep your phone and any medical devices charged. If you have a car, keep it gassed up.

**8. Evacuate early.** As soon as local leaders advise people to evacuate, go to your preplanned location. Don't risk being trapped without access to electricity, clean water and supplies. Plus, early evacuation gives you a better chance of being housed in a special-needs shelter. When you arrive at a shelter, alert workers about your health conditions so you may get the support you need.

**9. Update your plan and restock your kit.** At least once a year, review your emergency plan with your doctor. On an ongoing basis, swap out items with expiration dates.