

# Preparing Your Family For An Emergency

When preparing for an emergency, plan on having enough supplies to get you and your family through at least the first 72 hours. After a major emergency, there's a good chance that traditional emergency response teams will be too busy to take care of you and your family. You need to prepare your home and neighborhood.

## The Plan

- Stock up on at least a three-day supply of food, water, clothes, medical supplies and other necessary equipment for everyone in your family. Make sure everyone knows where to find them. (See the information sheet on emergency supplies.)
- Decide where and when to reunite your family should you be apart when a disaster strikes.
- Choose a person outside the immediate area to contact if family members are separated. Long distance phone service will probably be restored sooner than local service. Do not use the phone immediately after a major emergency.
- Know the policies of the school or daycare center your children attend. Make plans to have someone pick them up if you are unable to get to them.
- If you have a family member who does not speak English, prepare an emergency card written in English indicating that person's identification, address and any special needs such as medication or allergies. Tell that person to keep the card with him/her at all times.
- Conduct Earthquake: Duck, Cover & Hold drills every six months with your family.
- Practice Stop, Drop and Roll drills for fire, as well as emergency exit drills in the house (EDITH) regularly.
- Know the safest place in each room because it will be difficult to move from one room to another during an earthquake or explosion.
- Locate the shutoff valves for water, gas and electricity. Learn how to shut off the valves before an emergency. If you have any questions, call your utility company. Remember not to shut off utility valves unless directed to do so by your utility company.
- Make copies of vital records and keep them in a safe deposit box in another city or state. Make sure your originals are stored safely.
- Before a major emergency occurs, call your local Red Cross chapter and Office of Emergency Services to find out about their plans for emergency shelters and temporary medical centers in case of a disaster.
- Establish all the possible ways to exit your house. Keep those areas clear.
- Know the locations of the nearest fire and police stations.
- Take photos and/or videos of your valuables. Make copies and keep them with a friend or relative in another city or state.
- Include your babysitter and other household help in your plans.
- Keep an extra pair of eyeglasses and house and car keys on hand.
- Keep extra cash and change. If electricity is out, you will not be able to use an ATM.

## General Tips

- Stay away from heavy furniture, appliances, large glass panes, shelves holding objects, and large decorative masonry, brick or plaster such as fireplaces.
- Keep your hallway clear. It is usually one of the safest places to be during an earthquake or explosion.
- Stay away from kitchens and garages, which tend to be the most dangerous places because of the many items kept there.

**Be Smart  
Be Prepared  
Be Responsible**

# Emergency Supplies Checklist

*Stocking up now on emergency supplies can add to your safety and comfort during and after an earthquake. Store enough supplies for at least 72 hours.*

## Essentials

✓

- Water — 1 gallon per person per day (a week's supply of water is preferable)
- Water purification kit
- First aid kit, freshly stocked
- First aid book
- Food
- Can opener (non-electric)
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Portable radio, flashlight and spare batteries
- Essential medications
- Extra pair of eyeglasses
- Extra pair of house and car keys
- Fire extinguisher — A-B-C type
- Food, water and restraint (leash or carrier) for pets
- Cash and change
- Baby supplies: formula, bottle, pacifier, soap and baby powder, clothing, blankets, baby wipes, disposable diapers, canned food and juices.

## Sanitation Supplies

✓

- Large plastic trash bags for waste; tarps and rain ponchos
- Large trash cans
- Bar soap and liquid detergent
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Feminine hygiene supplies
- Toilet paper
- Household bleach

## Safety and Comfort

✓

- Sturdy shoes
- Heavy gloves for clearing debris
- Candles and matches
- Light sticks
- Change of clothing
- Knife or razor blades
- Garden hose for siphoning and firefighting
- Tent
- Communication kit: paper, pens, stamps

## Cooking

✓

- Plastic knives, forks, spoons
- Paper plates and cups
- Paper towels
- Heavy-duty aluminum foil
- Camping stove for outdoor cooking (caution: before using fire to cook, make sure there are no gas leaks; never use charcoal indoors)

## Tools and Supplies

✓

- Axe, shovel, broom
- Adjustable wrench for turning off gas
- Tool kit including a screwdriver, pliers and a hammer
- Coil of 1/2" rope
- Plastic tape, staple gun and sheeting for window replacement
- Bicycle
- City map

# Tips for Preparing Children

*Children need to be prepared for an earthquake as much as adults, if not more.*

## Infants and Toddlers

*For infants and toddlers, special emphasis should be placed on making their environment as safe as possible.*



- Cribs should be placed away from windows and tall, unsecured bookcases and shelves that could slide or topple.
- A minimum of a 72-hour supply of extra water, formula, bottles, food, juices, clothing, disposable diapers, baby wipes and prescribed medications should be stored where it is most likely to be accessible after an earthquake. Also keep an extra diaper bag with these items in your car.
- Store strollers, wagons, blankets and cribs with appropriate wheels to evacuate infants, if necessary.
- Install bumper pads in cribs or bassinets to protect babies during the shaking.
- Install latches on all cupboards (not just those young children can reach) so that nothing can fall on your baby during a quake.

## Preschool and School-age Children

*By age three or so, children can understand what an earthquake is and how to get ready for one.*

*Take the time to explain what causes earthquakes in terms they'll understand. Include your children in family discussions and planning for earthquake safety. Conduct drills and review safety procedures every six months.*



- Show children the safest places to be in each room when an earthquake hits. Also show them all possible exits from each room.
- Use sturdy tables to teach children to Duck, Cover & Hold.
- Teach children what to do wherever they are during an earthquake (at school, in a tall building, outdoors).
- Make sure children's emergency cards at school are up-to-date.
- Although children should not turn off any utility valves, it's important that they know what gas smells like. Advise children to tell an adult if they smell gas after an earthquake.

**Ready  
To Ride It Out?**

# Tips for the Elderly

## Before an Earthquake

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  - Eliminate hazards. Make it as easy as possible to quickly get under a sturdy table or desk for protection.
  - Anchor special equipment such as telephones and life support systems. Fasten tanks of gas, such as oxygen, to the wall.
  - Keep a list of medications, allergies, special equipment, names and numbers of doctors, pharmacists and family members. Make sure you have this list with you at all times.
  - Keep an extra pair of eyeglasses and medication with emergency supplies.
  - Keep walking aids near you at all times. Have extra walking aids in different rooms of the house.
  - Put a security light in each room. These lights plug into any outlet and light up automatically if there is a loss of electricity. They continue operating automatically for four to six hours, and they can be turned off by hand in an emergency.
  - Make sure you have a whistle to signal for help.
  - Keep extra batteries for hearing aids with your emergency supplies. Remember to replace them annually.
  - Keep extra emergency supplies at your bedside.

- Find two people you trust who will check on you after an earthquake. Tell them your special needs. Show them how to operate any equipment you use. Show them where your emergency supplies are kept. Give them a spare key.

## During and After an Earthquake

- If you are in bed or sitting down, do not get up.
- If you are standing, duck and cover or sit down. You could be thrown to the floor if you are standing.
- Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least three days.
- Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports. For your own safety, cooperate fully with public safety officials and instructions.
- Prepare for aftershocks.
- If you evacuate, leave a message at your home telling family members and others where you can be found.

**Ready**  
To Ride It Out?

# Tips for the Physically Challenged

## Before an Earthquake



- Set up your home, apartment or workplace so that you can quickly get under a sturdy desk, table or other safe place for protection. Identify doorways that do not have doors in which you can take cover.
- Maintain a list of medications, allergies, special equipment, names and numbers of doctors, pharmacists and family members with you at all times.
- Keep extra medication with your emergency supplies.
- Keep extra emergency supplies at your bedside and by your wheelchair.
- Have walking aids near you at all times. Place extra walking aids in different rooms of the house.
- Put a security light in each room. These lights plug into any outlet and light up automatically if there is a loss of electricity. They continue operating automatically for four to six hours, and they can be turned off by hand in an emergency.
- Have a whistle near you to signal for help.
- Find two people you trust who will check on you after an earthquake. Tell them your special needs. Show them how to operate any equipment you use. Show them where your emergency supplies are kept. Give them a spare key.

## During and After an Earthquake

- If you are in bed or out of a wheelchair, stay where you are and cover your head and neck.
- If you are in a wheelchair, stay in it and go into a doorway that doesn't have a door. Cover your head and neck with your hands.
- Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least three days.
- Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports. For your own safety, cooperate fully with public safety officials and instructions.
- Prepare for aftershocks.
- If you evacuate your home, leave a message at your home telling family members and others where you can be found.

**Ready**  
To Ride It Out?