

15. AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Preparing for your medical needs

WHY ACT?

If you or your family members have chronic health conditions requiring medication or in-home medical equipment, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. During an emergency, your pharmacy may be closed or supplies may be limited, so plan ahead.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Step 1: Choose the length of time for which you wish to be prepared. Plan for a minimum of three days.
- Step 2: Make a list of the medications all members of your household take, why they take them, and their dosages, or make copies of all your prescription slips.
- Step 3: Purchase extra non-prescription drugs.
- Step 4: If possible, ask your doctor for reserve prescriptions of essential medications and fill them.
- Step 5: Pack these reserve medications and the list of medications in your Go Bag (see Action 14, pg. 32).
- Step 6: Make a note on your calendar to replace all of these medications before they expire.
- Step 7: Purchase a small cooler and store a block of blue ice in your freezer if you rely on medications that require refrigeration, such as insulin.
- Step 8: Keep your in-home medical equipment well maintained and refer to the owner's manual for information about how to keep it in good condition.
- Step 9: Purchase and store the supplies or replacement parts the equipment may need.
- Step 10: If you rely on medical equipment that requires electric power, contact your medical supply company for information regarding a back-up power source such as a battery. Follow the manufacturer's directions when installing the equipment and the battery back-up. If you use a portable generator for emergency power, follow the manufacturer's directions for safe operation, and check with local fire and building officials for regulations governing generator and fuel use. Ask your utility company if the medical equipment qualifies you to be listed as a life-sustaining equipment customer.

Con Edison

800-75-CONED (800-752-6633); TTY: 800-642-2308

Keyspan Energy Delivery

Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island

800-698-2110; TTY: 718-237-2857

Rockaway Peninsula

800-930-5003; TTY: 631-755-6660

Long Island Power Authority

800-490-0025; TTY: 631-755-6660

- Step 11: If you receive dialysis or other medical treatments, find out your provider's emergency plan, including where your back-up site is located.
- Step 12: If you rely on oxygen, talk to your vendor about emergency replacements.
- Step 13: Write down the style and serial number of medical devices (such as pacemakers) and usage instructions and include in your Go Bag.

MATERIALS

Critical medical supplies upon which you depend.

TIME

A half hour to several hours, depending on your needs and circumstances.

RESILIENCY GAIN

The ability to maintain the continuity of health care you need.