

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS

Dealing with a disaster such as an earthquake, storm or power outage can be especially frightening for people with special medical needs. You can gain confidence in providing for the safety of yourself and your family during an emergency by planning ahead. Imagine how you will be during such a disaster and the three days following it. Think about your special medical needs and how you can prepare to meet them. In addition to the usual emergency preparedness activities, you may find the following information helpful.

Emergency Bag

Have a bag packed at all times with the medications and medical supplies you use on a regular basis. In the event of an emergency, you may have to leave your home on very short notice. Include these items:

- A three-day supply (minimum) of all of your medications. Store the medications in their original containers.
- A list of all of your medications: name of medication, dose, frequency, and the name of the doctor prescribing it.
- A three-day supply (minimum) of the medical supplies you know you will need, such as bandages, ostomy bags or syringes.

Oxygen and Breathing Equipment

- Have a three-day supply (or more) of the breathing equipment that you need on a daily basis such as tubing, solutions, medications, etc.
- If you use oxygen, have an emergency three-day supply (or more) on hand.
- Oxygen tanks are heavy and can create a hazard during an earthquake. Check with your medical supply company about how to brace them securely. Do it.

Intravenous (IV) and Feeding Tube Equipment

- Attach written operating instructions to all equipment.
- Know if your infusion pump has battery back up, and how long it would last in an emergency.
- Ask your home care provider about manual infusion techniques in case of a power outage.

Electrically Powered Medical Equipment

- Medical equipment that requires electrical power such as beds, breathing equipment or infusion pumps may become inoperable when the electricity fails. Contact your medical supply company for information regarding a back-up power source such as a battery or generator.
- After installing back-up power equipment, check with your local utility company to be sure it is properly installed.