



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary of Health

Making a disaster supply kit - Including a detailed list for first aid kits -

A disaster supply kit for your home or an evacuation should include items in six basic areas: (1) water, (2) food, (3) first aid supplies and medications, (4) clothing and bedding, (5) tools and emergency supplies, and (6) important family documents.

You will need a supply kit if you are confined to your home. It is also valuable if you evacuate to a place other than a well-stocked shelter or if you're unsure of the shelter's supplies.

Tips for Making Your Kit

- Keep loose items in airtight plastic bags.
- Gather the kit's items in easy-to-carry containers or duffle bags. Put kit within reach of your most often used exit.
- Check and update your kit and family needs at least once a year.

Tips for Water & Food Supplies

- A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water daily. Heat and intense activity can double this amount. Children, nursing mothers and those with special needs may require more.
- Food preparation and sanitation require another two quarts (minimum) per person daily.
- Purchased bottled water that has been sealed is best for storage. It meets FDA guidelines for food, is not as vulnerable to temperature changes as unsealed water and has no shelf life. (Some bottles do have expiration dates, but this is mainly for inventory control.) If for any reason you must disinfect water, use unscented bleach in the ratio of 8 drops per gallon, about 1/8 teaspoon, and let the mixture sit 30 minutes before use.
- Choose compact, lightweight foods that do not require refrigeration, cooking or preparation and foods that use little or no water.
- Hand washing with soap and water is extremely important. However, in the event water for hand washing is unavailable, use alcohol-based sanitizer.

DOH recommends a three-day supply of food and water in your kit, including:

- One gallon of water per person per day
- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- Staples (salt, sugar, pepper, spices, etc.)
- Powdered milk and canned juices
- High-energy snacks and comfort/stress foods
- Food for infants and individuals with special needs
- Pedialyte (to restore hydration if needed)
- Mess kits or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils and
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife

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For tools and emergency supplies, DOH recommends:

- Cash or traveler's checks, coins
- Map of the area for locating shelters
- Battery-operated radio and flashlight, extra batteries
- Fire extinguisher
- Pliers and shut-off wrench to turn off household water and/or gas
- Compass, signal flare, whistle and tube tent
- Plastic sheeting, storage containers and bucket with tight lid
- Plastic garbage bags and ties for sanitation
- Tape (duct, masking)
- Candles and Matches in a waterproof container
- Paper, pencil
- Needles, thread
- Medicine dropper
- Aluminum foil
- Toilet paper, moistened towelettes and towels
- Soap, liquid detergent, disinfectant and unscented household chlorine bleach
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Infant supplies (diapers, bottles and pacifiers)

For clothing and bedding supplies, DOH recommends:

- At least complete change of clothing and footwear per person
- Sturdy shoes, work boots, hats and gloves
- Blankets or sleeping bags and pillows
- Rain gear
- Extra prescription glasses, sunglasses and/or contact lenses

DOH recommends having first aid kits for your home and cars, including:

- A three-day supply of each person's vital medications
- Prescription drugs
- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2-inch and 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- 2-inch and 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- Triangular bandages (3)
- Latex gloves (at least 2 pairs)
- Cleansing agent, soap and moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic and antibiotic ointment
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant

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First Aid Kit, continued

- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Scissors, tweezers, needle and thermometer
- Tongue depressors (2)
- Non-prescription drugs
- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication, antacid and laxative
- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Sunscreen
- Mosquito repellent, with DEET when appropriate

DOH recommends copies of the following important family documents are kept in a waterproof, portable container within kits:

- Insurance policies
- Contracts and deeds
- Stocks and bonds
- Social Security cards and passports
- Immunization records and prescriptions
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and company names and telephone numbers
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates) and wills
- Current photographs of family members

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