

Hurricane Preparation Tips for Seniors

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When a hurricane threatens, the senior population may experience additional peril. They face many more obstacles during an emergency than most people: isolation, limited mobility, and medical needs. Older adults can lower their risk by preparing for hurricanes and other emergencies before they happen.

Make a List of People Who Can Help

You may rely on a single relative as your main caregiver. But emergencies can happen at any time, and your usual caregiver may not be with you. It is important to have a list of people you can call on.

Create a chain of contacts. Assign who will contact who during an emergency. Ask family, friends, and neighbors. Do not leave it all to one person because if they are injured or incapacitated, you may be left stranded. Keep your list of helpers in your emergency kit.

If it is difficult for you to get around on your own, you may need someone to help you get into your home shelter or evacuate. Identify ahead of time who will help you.

Many communication apps are available for smartphones. Choose one or two, then ask the family and friends on your emergency contact list to download these same apps. They can be used to communicate if phone services fail.

Be Sure Your Medical Information is Available

If you have a medical condition, you may choose to wear a medical alert bracelet or pendant. This could save your life, especially if you are a diabetic or allergic to specific medications, etc. Any of the medical alert jewelry that is available today could help first responders treat you properly in case you are unable to give or tell them your medical history.



Things You Need to Take if You Leave Your Home

List: Before an emergency arises, make a list of everything you need to stay healthy. Include the name and contact information of your doctor and pharmacy, a list of your medications, and any medical devices you use. Then let the people on your contact list know where the list will be in case you need it.

Kit: One thing you will need is a kit with all the items you need to survive for a minimum of 72 hours. For a comprehensive list, visit www.ready.gov. The American Red Cross can also help you with information on recommended items.

Cash: The general rule of thumb is to have at least enough cash to pay for 30 days of essential living expenses. Be sure you have at least some of your cash in small bills and some in coins in case you need it.

Everyone can take steps to prepare for the kinds of emergencies that are the most likely where they live. In Louisiana those include hurricanes and river flooding, but also flash flooding, fires and more. Sometimes the danger is known well ahead of time, and you have time to prepare. Other times, you must react quickly. Always follow directions given by local officials when deciding whether to evacuate. Know who will help before you need it.

For more information on being ready, see [Preparing Makes Sense for Older Americans - YouTube](#). Another resource for preparation is the FEMA Mitigation Outreach phone line at 833-336-2487.

