

DISASTER TIP SHEET

PANDEMICS AND DISEASE OUTBREAKS



HEALTHCARE
READY

PREPARING YOUR HEALTH FOR DISEASE OUTBREAKS

- Fill prescriptions on time or ahead of time, if you can**
 - Call your pharmacist to ask if your prescriptions can be filled early
 - View Healthcare Ready's blog on the refill-too-soon laws by state: HealthcareReady.Org/A-Review-of-State-Emergency-Prescription-Refill-Protocols
- Try to keep non-perishable food, water, and can openers on hand**
 - Go for canned meats, fruits and vegetables that are ready to eat, and can be used in a [renal diet](#)
 - Protein bars, cereal and granola, and dried fruit are great snacks to have
- Fully charge your electronic devices, and pack spare batteries and chargers**
 - To conserve battery: limit the use of unnecessary apps and switch your phone to low-power mode when fully charged
- Keep a list of your local healthcare facilities, with addresses, phone numbers, and emails/websites**
 - Consider these facilities:
 - Hospitals/ERs
 - Pharmacies
 - Urgent care clinics
 - Ancillary care:
 - Dialysis Centers, Cancer Treatment Centers
- Make sure you know your prescription medication and health information - use [Rx on the Run](#) to keep a list of your prescriptions**
 - [Rx on the Run](#) is a personalized wallet-sized card that lists your prescriptions with the latest dosage and instructions
 - Visit HealthcareReady.org/Rx-on-the-Run to fill yours out!
- Plan for any chronic conditions you may have**
 - **Diabetes:** Talk to your pharmacist about keeping a supply of insulin on hand - Try to refrain from eating sugar and other carbohydrates
 - **Kidney disease:** Make sure you have access to dialysis treatment and use the [renal diet](#)
 - **Cardiovascular disease & hypertension:** Try to refrain from high-salt and fatty food and aim for 30 minutes of activity a day to manage your blood pressure
 - **Pulmonary disease:** Work with your supplier to understand options for keeping resupplies of oxygen with you
 - **Disability:** Identify a trusted caretaker if necessary
 - **Aging:** Post emergency numbers near every house phone and cellular phone
 - **Asthma:** Have a plan to ensure you have a supply of your asthma medications and supplies
 - **Cancer:** If you have a [cancer survivorship care plan](#), keep a copy handy and take steps to lower your risk for infections

Keep a list of helpful hotlines

- Healthcare Ready: 1-866-247-2694
- FEMA Disaster Assistance Helpline: 1-800-621-3362
- Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 (or text "TalkWithUS" to 66746)
- Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER): 1-866-901-3773
- Red Cross: 1-800-733-2767
- American Diabetes Association: 1-800-342-2283
- American Heart Association: 1-800-242-8721
- American Association of People with Disabilities: 1-800-840-8844
- American Stroke Association: 1-888-478-7653

PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH DURING AN OUTBREAK

Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, or use hand sanitizing gel, and avoid touching your face, nose, and mouth

Disinfect surfaces you touch regularly (like desks, doorknobs, and phones) as often as you can

Avoid traveling to areas and regions where there is a concentration of cases

Avoid interactions with those who are sick

If you are sick and think you may have been exposed to the disease

- Call your doctor and let them know your symptoms
- Try to stay home and keep distance from others
- Work with your employer to determine their sick leave policy, which may be more generous during an outbreak
- Cover your hands and mouth when you sneeze and cough

Only follow health advice from your healthcare providers and trusted public health sources like [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) (and [WHO.int](https://www.who.int) during a global pandemic)

Make sure your medications remain stable

- Some medicines must remain within a certain temperature range
- Tip: insulin can remain stable between 59°F and 86°F for up to 28 days¹

Use [RxOpen.org](https://www.rxopen.org) to find open pharmacies near you

Drink plenty of bottled water and avoid skipping meals or eating spoiled food

- Eat nutrient-rich, non-perishable foods such as fruits and vegetables

Check with your health insurance provider for emergency support resources and hotlines

- Start by calling the number on the back of your insurance card for assistance
- If you don't have insurance, call 2-1-1 and ask about local services that may be able to help
- If there is a disaster declaration, you can also try to apply for FEMA Disaster Assistance for financial support by calling 800-621-3362 or visiting [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.DisasterAssistance.gov)

¹ <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/emergency-preparedness-drugs/information-regarding-insulin-storage-and-switching-between-products-emergency>