



A Guide to Surviving Emergencies and Natural Disasters with Type 1 Diabetes

Be Ready: Building Your Emergency Diabetes Kit

During an emergency or natural disaster, it can be hard to manage your type 1 diabetes and stay healthy. Stress and changes in eating habits can impact blood glucose levels. It may also be hard to get the medicines you need and store them safely. Taking time to prepare now can save a lot of time and worry when you are facing floods, fires or loss of electricity.

STEP 1: GATHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO ADD TO YOUR KIT

- On a piece of paper write down:
 - That you have type 1 diabetes (a medical alert bracelet is helpful to let people know this in emergencies too)
 - All medical conditions and allergies you have
 - Your current medications, doses, and when you take them.
 - Names, phone numbers and addresses for your doctor and pharmacy
 - Names and phone numbers for three or more emergency contacts. Include at least one person who does not live with you.
- A copy of your health insurance card
- A copy of your photo ID



STEP 2: GET YOUR INSULIN READY TO GO

- Store insulin in an insulated lunch bag in the refrigerator so that it is ready to grab in an emergency.
- Have reusable ice packs in your freezer. If you lose power, use them to keep your insulin cool. You can also get Frio cases to put in your kit. They keep medications cool without ice.
 - Do **NOT** use dry ice or freeze any medications
- If you lose power and you are not able to keep your insulin cool, don't throw it out! In an emergency, it is okay to use it.

Try to stock up on prescriptions for an emergency:

- Ask your doctor to give you a prescription for extra insulin vials or pens. If you use an insulin pump, ask your doctor to give you pens of long and rapid acting insulin to use if your pump fails.
- Ask your insurance company if you can get 90-day prescription refills via mail.
- If a state of emergency has been declared, ask your pharmacy or state health department if there is a "refill waiver" in place.



STEP 3: PACK YOUR BAG

Find a backpack or other zippered tote and add these items you will want to have on hand in an emergency:

- A one week supply (or more) of all medications, including glucagon.
- Supplies to check your blood sugar, like a glucose meter, unexpired test strips, lancing device and lancets. Don't forget extra batteries!
- Extra supplies for your insulin pump and/or CGM - always have a meter on hand, even if you are on a CGM.
- Pen needles or insulin syringes
- Ketone strips
- Empty plastic bottle or sharps container to safely carry syringes, needles and lancets
- Items to treat low blood sugar like juice, small packs of hard candy (not sugar-free), regular soda, glucose tablets or gel, honey and glucagon
- A 2-day supply of foods that won't spoil like canned tuna, beans, nuts, or high-fiber/protein granola bars
- Enough bottled water to last for at least 3 days
- Pen and notepad to record blood sugar, other test results and any new signs/symptoms
- First aid supplies

- Extra clothing, including socks and underwear
- Cell phone
- Chargers for phone and pump including battery pack. Solar chargers work great for this
- Flashlight and batteries
- Cash



STORING AND USING INSULIN DURING AN EMERGENCY

Insulin doesn't work as well after it gets warm. The longer it goes without being cooled, the less it will help to control your blood sugar. But in an emergency, insulin can go un-refrigerated for up to 28 days and still be safe to use if you follow these tips:

- Store your unopened insulin in a cooler with cold pack. Insulin should not be frozen so do **NOT** use dry ice or put it directly on ice packs. Opened insulin is good at room temperature for 28 days.
- Keep insulin away from direct heat and out of the sunlight.

- If you remove insulin from its original vial or try to dilute it, throw it away after two weeks.
- Once the emergency is over, replace any insulin that was not kept cool as soon as possible.

HELPFUL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Insulin Manufacturers

- Lilly: 800-545-5979
- Sanofi-Aventis: 800-633-1610
- Novo Nordisk: 800-727-6500

Pump/CGM Manufacturers

- Omnipod/Insulet: 800-591-3455
- Dexcom: 888-738-3646
- Medtronic: 800-633-8766
- Tandem: 877-801-6901
- Freestyle Libre: 855-632-8658

For Help Getting Insulin & Medications

- www.getinsulin.org
- The Sanofi Patient Connection provides free Apidra, Lantus, Soliqua 100/33 and Toujeoat to uninsured patients 800-221-4025

- Lilly Disaster Response gives free insulin (Basalglar, Glucagon, Trulicity, Humalog, Humulin and Humalog Mix) in emergencies. 800-545-5979
- Novo Nordisk donates free medicine (Levemir, Novolog, Novolin, GlucaGen Hype Kit, Victoza and disposable needles for FlexPens and Victoza). 866-310-7549
- The NIDDK connects people with programs that can cover T1D medical expenses. 800-860-8747
- Partnership for Prescription Assistance helps cover the cost of supplies & medicines. 888-477-2669

For Help Getting T1D Supplies

- BD offers a coupon for a free box of syringes and other savings. 888-367-9539
- Lifescan helps with glucose monitor supplies. 800-227-8862

Mental Health Support

Natural disasters and emergencies can cause feelings of severe anxiety and fear. Text the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) at 741-741 for 24/7 crisis support and resources.