

# Should I Stay or Should I Go?



Flood



Fire



Lightning



Terrorism



Heatwave



Snowstorm



Hurricane



Bombing

Tab 8

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## Deciding to Stay or Go

The first important decision you need to make in an emergency is whether you should stay where you are or leave. Plan for both possibilities. When an emergency happens, use your common sense and the information you have to make a decision.



Local authorities may not always be able to give information about what is happening and what you should do right away. You should watch TV or listen to local radio news reports for information and instructions.

If you are told to leave your home or seek medical treatment, grab your emergency supply kit and leave immediately.

**Sometimes it may be safer to stay where you are and not go anywhere. If you see debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is contaminated, stay inside! If the air is contaminated, that means it is dangerous to breathe.**



## **To 'shelter in place' and keep outside air from getting in your room:**

- ✓ Bring your family and pets inside.
- ✓ Lock your doors and close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.
- ✓ Seal all the windows, doors, air vents and fireplace openings with plastic sheeting and duct tape. Think about measuring and cutting the sheeting ahead of time to save time during an emergency.
- ✓ Turn off fans, air conditioning, and forced air heating systems. Take out any tubes for portable air conditioners and close windows.
- ✓ Stay in a room at the center of your house that doesn't have many windows. Take your emergency supply kit with you unless you think it has been contaminated.
- ✓ Be prepared to use what you have on hand to create a barrier between yourself and anything that has been contaminated.
- ✓ Watch the news on television, listen to local radio news reports, or check the internet often for official news and instructions from local authorities.

## Emergency Supply Kit

Your emergency supply kit should include things you may need in an emergency away from home. Keep it someplace that is easy to remember and reach when you need it.

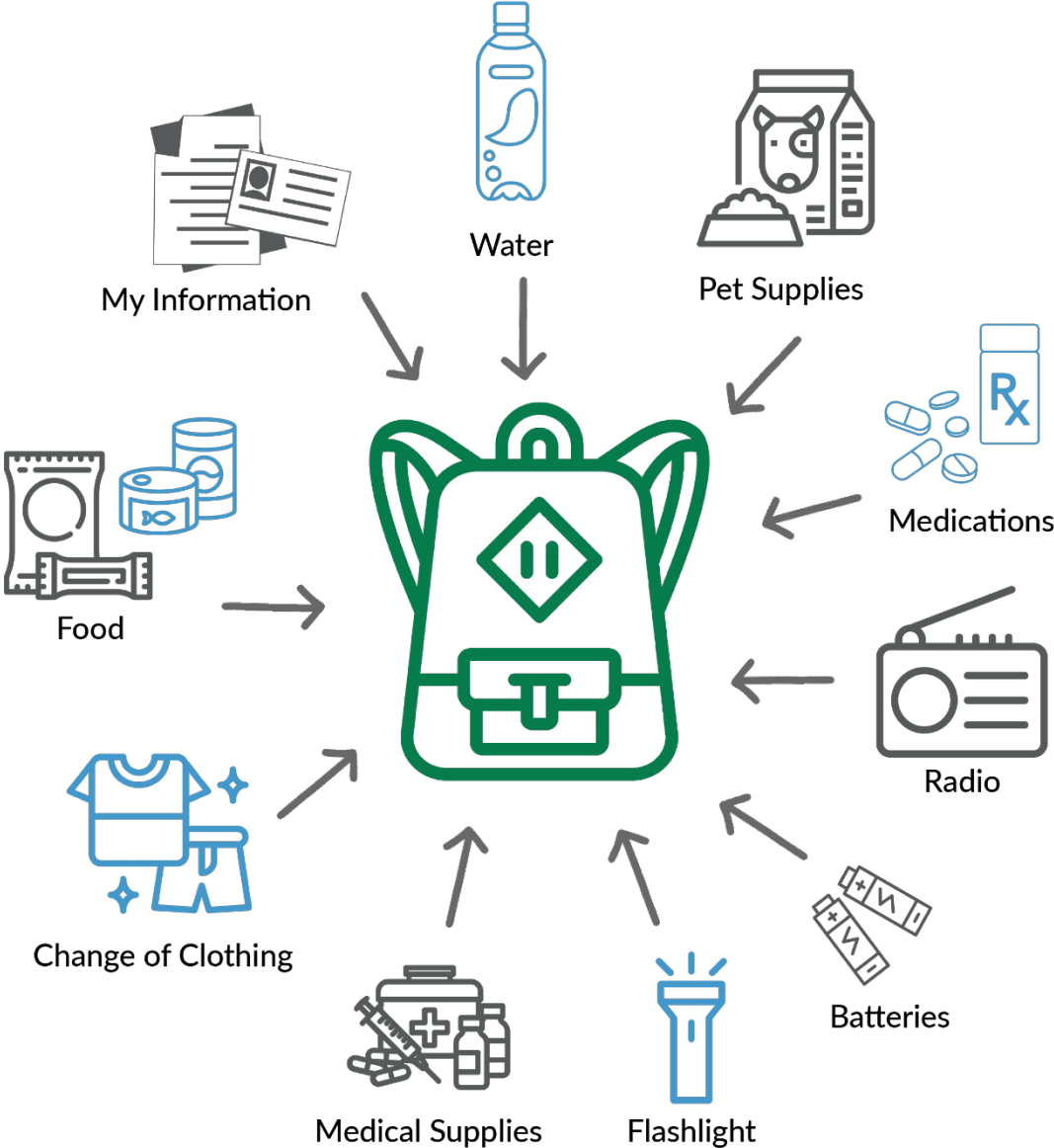
Think about the things you own that mean a lot to you – like a family photo album, computer or jewelry box – and keep them where you can find them quickly in an emergency.

It is also a good idea to keep a “Go Bag.” This is a backpack or big bag you can carry with you to hold your:


- Keys
- Cell phone
- Wallet
- Money and credit cards
- Change of clothes
- Medicines
- Medical supplies
- Food and water
- Checkbook
- I.D. cards
- Flashlight
- Pet supplies


Remember to bring this bag with you if you have to leave your home quickly because of an emergency.


# Emergency “Go Bag”






## Emergency Supplies to Gather Together

- The purse or bag you usually use 

-  Extra money. Keep the amounts small, like \$1 and \$5 bills and quarters. (Remember that ATMs may not function during a power outage.)


- Bottled water and water purification tablets 


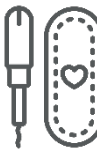
-  Food. Store enough canned or dried food to last 3 to 5 days.


-  First aid supplies and a fire extinguisher 


- Can opener 


- Paper towels 

- Plastic bags for throwing away trash 

- Toilet paper and feminine products  

- Hand sanitizer or liquid soap 

- Paper to write on and pens, pencils, crayons or wax pencils 

-  Cell phone. Save your preferred contacts as emergency contacts, or save their phone numbers under the name ICE (this stands for In Case of Emergency). Police officers or firefighters will know how to look for the number if you need help.



- Health information card



- Medicine and copies of your prescriptions. Make sure you have enough medicine to last at least 7 days.



- Flashlight that runs on batteries or can be wound up to power on.



- Signaling device, like a whistle, bell or beeper




- Small radio that runs on batteries or can be wound up to power on



- Watch or clock that runs on batteries or can be wound up to work.

- Blanket 

-  Extra batteries

- Walking stick, cane or trekking poles 

-  Cook stove with fuel

- Heavy gloves 

-  Duct tape

- Cloth tape to wrap your feet under your socks to prevent blisters



- A full change of clothing



- Extra socks



- Comfortable shoes

- Special equipment specific to your needs. This can include extra contact lenses or glasses, communication devices, laptop computers, hearing aids and batteries or mobility aids



- Sun block with SPF

- Lip balm with SPF

- What other items do you think you'll need?**

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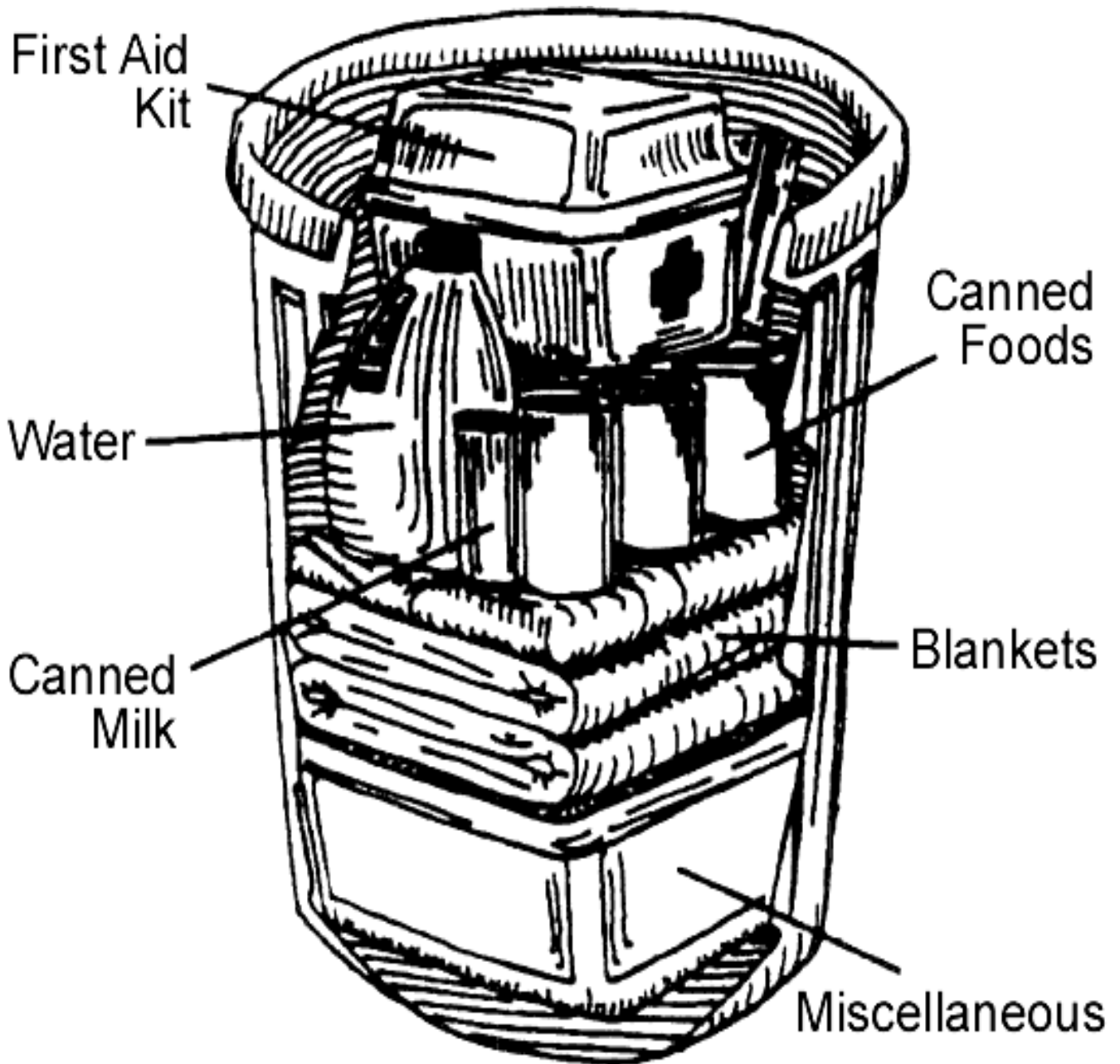
Source: Adapted from the 'Emergency Preparedness Tool Kit for People with Disabilities' from the Occupation Therapy Department at VCU & Virginia Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (Va-LEND) 2007.

[partnership.vcu.edu/media/partnership2022/resource-downloads/Emergency\\_Prep\\_Toolkit\\_FINAL\\_April\\_2007.pdf](http://partnership.vcu.edu/media/partnership2022/resource-downloads/Emergency_Prep_Toolkit_FINAL_April_2007.pdf)

## Storing Emergency Supplies

- Get the best supplies you can afford for your emergency supply kits so they don't break easily.
- Choose a safe place for your emergency supply kits. Spaces that are cool in temperature and dark, like a closet or garage, are good options.
- If you live in an apartment or don't have a lot of space, get creative! Put your emergency supply kits under your bed or stairs.
- Layer supplies in your 72-hour emergency supply kit in a large container, like a plastic garbage can on wheels. Look at the picture on the next page.
  - Put toothbrushes, soap, eating and cooking utensils and personal supplies into a box and place it at the bottom of the container.
  - Next, put in blankets and clothing.
  - Put water, food, and your first aid kit on top so you can reach them easily.
- If you're a camper or backpacker, you already have a head start. You can use the tent, stove and other gear you use for fun as part of your emergency supplies.

## 72-Hour emergency supply kit



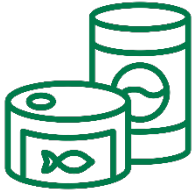
## Storing water

- Store enough water so that everyone in your family will have enough to drink for at least 3 days. Here are some things to consider when storing water:



- Each person in your family will need about 1 gallon of water every day to drink, wash and cook with.
- Your pets need water too! Store extra water for your pet to drink.
- Put reminders on your calendar to replace the water in your emergency supply kits every 6 months. The plastic bottles may expire before the water is used!

## Storing food



Canned foods can be stored easily and last a long time. Choose items like ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables that you and your family enjoy. Put reminders on your calendar to check your food supplies to make sure they are not expired. If you replace foods about 3 weeks or 1 month before their expiration date, you can still eat them before they go bad so that they don't go to waste.



Buy canned or dried juice mixes, powdered or canned milk, cereals and rice. Choose foods that are “high energy,” like peanut butter, jelly, crackers, unsalted nuts and trail mix.

Make sure your food is stored at the right temperature. Some foods spoil if they are not stored the right way, and you may get sick if you eat them.



Remember to rotate your food. Most food comes with an expiration date on it. Eating food after that date can make you sick, so put a reminder on your calendar to check your foods every 6 months so you're sure they are safe to eat. Eat the food that is going to expire soon and buy new food for your emergency supply kit.



Don't forget your pets! Store canned or dried pet food and an extra collar and leash, in addition to your pet's emergency supply kit. Pets are usually not allowed in emergency shelters, so you may have to take them to a pet-friendly shelter while you go to an emergency shelter for people (if there is a pet-friendly shelter available). Your pets will need their emergency supply kits! Usually, it is not safe to leave your pet at home if you need to evacuate the area – you should try to plan ahead and leave early for a pet-friendly safer location away from the disaster. If you must leave your pet at home, leave them with additional food, water, and current identification tags.

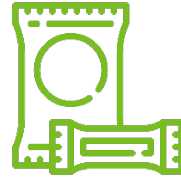
Remember to pack a can opener, cooking and eating utensils, and some basic food seasonings in your emergency supply kit.



Source: PDXPrepared (2007). How to prepare a 72-hour Kit. Accessed January 2009



## What Foods to Include



**Pick foods that you and your family enjoy.**

It is very important that you choose foods that you and your family like to eat. **Choose foods that are easy to make or ready to eat.**

When you use the food in your emergency kit, you may have been evacuated from your home, so you won't have your usual cooking supplies. You may have to stay in a Red Cross Shelter, campground or in your car while you drive to a safe place. Pick foods that are easy to make or do not need to be cooked.

**Don't spend a lot of money.**

Foods that don't need to be cooked can be expensive. Make a budget for the food you buy for your emergency supply kits and only buy what foods you will be able to use in an emergency.



## Examples of Foods to Pack

Here's a list of foods that you may want to add to your emergency supply kit:



- Beef or turkey jerky, dried meat or meat sticks
- Corned beef or roast beef hash in a can
- Applesauce cups or other fruit cups
- Canned or powdered milk and cereal snack packs
- Trail mix
- Raisins or dried fruit
- Peanuts or almonds
- Unrefrigerated pudding cups
- Granola bars or protein bars
- Juice boxes or protein shakes
- Fruit rolls
- Suckers, lollipops or hard candy
- Crackers
- Canned soup or chili

Source: University of California – Berkley. 72-hour kits. Accessed January 2009

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