



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Preparing for a disaster can literally save your life. The following is intended to be a guide;

1. **Make a List-**

The first step in preparing for a disaster is to make a list of important information such as medications, frequency, time and dosage. Make copies. It is also helpful to list the pharmacy, your Doctor's number and other important information including allergies, and medical/surgical history.

2. The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management is an excellent resource for disaster and emergency relief. <http://www.state.nj.us/njoem/>

3. Ensure you have a flash light and keep your mobile phone charged. If you own a smart phone there are numerous Emergency Apps that you can download such as; "My Emergency App"
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/my-emergency-app/id517226308?mt=8>

4. **Obtain a small Lunch Bag-**

A small lunch bag that has a cool pad or bar is ideal. You can safely store your medications in one location. Having the cooling pad can help keep certain medications cool enough to avoid spoiling such as insulin and nebulizer vials. Place a luggage tag on the handle that has your name and other identifiable information.

5. **Oxygen Users –**

Emergency or not New Jersey and many states have laws that require notification that you are on oxygen. Those agencies include but are not limited to; Local Fire Department, Gas Company and Electric Company. A placard should be placed on a Door or a highly visible area with "Oxygen in use". This is important for first responders such as fire and police officials visiting your Residence. You would be surprised that many patients have told me that the utility companies often respond faster when they know a patient is on life sustaining equipment. Most companies provide a backup "E-Cylinder" for patients in the event of a power disruption. An E-Cylinder can provide up to 6-8 hours on 2 liters per minute continuous. If a conserver is added, as much as 16 hours could be obtained. If you live in a remote location with frequent outages, ask your Oxygen provider for a Conserver. Ensure that you have your E-Cylinder available and check it at least monthly that it is full.

HOME FILL II-

If you have a Home Fill II concentrator setup, *ensure all portable tanks are full.*

Portable Oxygen Concentrator (POC)

If you have a POC, that means your oxygen concentrator is portable and is a combination of AC current and battery. Most POCs have AC power adaptors for power charging in a vehicle. In worst case scenarios you can always travel to a location that has power. It's a good idea to inspect the power cord and plugs on regular basis.

6. Power Mobility Devices-

Power wheel chairs for some patients can be life sustaining. In some situations, the mobility device may be the only way a patient can leave their home in a fire or another emergency. Check your batteries often to ensure they maintain a full charge. Report any mechanical, battery or electrical issues to your provider.

7. Nebulizers-

Maintaining your respiratory status is important. When there are power outages the patient can have their treatments disrupted. Micro nebulizers or Ultrasonic hand held battery operated nebulizers can be used virtually anywhere so you don't miss a treatment. Not all medications can be used with Micro Nebulizers such as those that have "oil based" ingredients so you need to check with your provider or Pharmacist for compatibility. Important keep your Portable nebulizer clean and battery fully charged.

8. CPAP/BiPAP-

Loss of power especially over a span of time can be physically taxing to those that suffer from sleep apnea. There are battery packs now available for most newer cpaps on the market. The battery packs tend to provide up to 6-8 hours without the heater. Some battery packs last longer and can use both. Battery packs are expensive and are not covered by insurance. There are low tech cost effective solutions such as Provent Nasal tabs or an oral appliance. Only a Doctor can determine whether as a backup Provent or an oral appliance can be used. These type of devices typically are not covered by insurance, but depending on how often you experience power outages and your symptoms, it may be a solution.

9. Plan a Fire Drill-

Simulating an event can better prepare you for the unknown. Plan a meeting with your family or care giver. Decide where you will meet outside the home in the event of a fire or emergency. Determine how you would leave the home if you are disabled. Ensure smoke detectors and carbon monoxide monitors are properly functioning. It's a good idea to have a fire extinguisher available to prevent the spread of a fire. A good place to keep it is under the kitchen sink and you should check it once per month. Local Fire Departments have Alert Stickers for children and pets that can placed on windows.

10. Social Media –

Core Care Technologies, Inc. as well as many local and federal government agencies have Social media \accounts including Face Book and Twitter. This forum provides a communication channel in real time with important updates and information.

Twitter @corecaretech

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