



## EMERGENCY KIT FOR THE CAR

**WATER.** **This is your most important item.** You will need water to drink, for first aid, and to take medicine. In your kit, have at least one gallon of water per person, based on who usually rides in your car. You could purchase a box of foil packets or cans of water at a camping store, or one liter bottles in a 20 bottle flat.

**PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.** **This is the second most important item.** If you take medications on which your health depends you must carry a three-day supply at all times. This would include heart, blood pressure and diabetic medications. If you regularly take other prescription drugs for allergies or other health concerns, it is also wise to carry these. Keep this supply fresh by rotating it every week. Also include any non-prescription medications you often use: nose drops, antihistamine, allergy remedies, diarrhea medication, headache remedies or indigestion medications. In times of stress such as an emergency health problems can become worse. Having proper medications and keeping to the prescribed schedule is very important.

**FOOD.** Food is important for psychological reasons and to keep your blood sugar level up to avoid dizzy or shaky feelings. For this reason you should select food for your kit that you like and that you are used to eating. In addition, people with diabetes, heart disease, or other health problems should consult their physicians for advice about the foods for their kits. The healthy general public should select foods like crackers, peanut butter, snack packs of fruit or pudding, granola bars, protein bars, dried fruit, water-packed tuna or chicken and single serving cans of juice. Plan on four light meals per day.

Avoid high sugar foods like candy and soft drinks as they make you very thirsty. Avoid alcoholic beverages.

Avoid MREs, as they are very high in fat and sodium and can make you very sick if you are not accustomed to a high fat diet.

Avoid “emergency food bars” as they are designed for shipwrecked people who are sedentary in a boat and may get seasick. They are designed to keep blood sugar up in a few bites. They are not designed to satisfy hunger in a person who is moving around and working. They are also very high in sugar and fat.

Avoid camping foods and other dried food, as they require a lot of water consumption to metabolize. They are also high in calories.

**LIGHT SOURCE.** A chemical light stick provides long shelf life and a sparkless source of light. A flashlight with a special long-life battery or a long-burning candle may be used after you have checked to be sure that there is no leaking gas or petroleum in the

area. Do not rely on a regular flashlight as ordinary batteries lose their power quickly in the heat of a car. You might consider an electric light with an attachment to your car cigarette lighter, available at camping stores.

**COMMUNICATION.** Your cell phone can be charged from your car battery. Use only the text function in a disaster to conserve battery life and bandwidth. Even when the voice function will not work it is likely that a text will go through. Put your spouse or parents' numbers in the ICE function, and keep other key numbers in the directory.

**RADIO.** Your car radio is your source for emergency broadcast information. Get a list of all-news stations for the area where you live, work, and areas you drive to or through. Keep this list in your glove compartment and in your emergency kit. A hand cranked emergency radio is also useful and eliminates the need for batteries. These often come with flashlights that run on the same power source. Some also have a solar power panel.

**EMERGENCY BLANKET.** Mylar emergency blankets are available at camping-goods stores. They can be used as a blanket or a heat shield against the sun. They fold into a small package. A thermal blanket may be added when storage space permits.

**FIRST AID SUPPLIES.** Include 4x4 gauze, cloth that can be torn into strips to hold a bandage in place, Kerlex, anti-bacterial ointment (such as Neosporin, Bacitracin), burn cream, rolls of gauze, large gauze pads, rolls of first aid tape, scissors, a large cloth square for a sling or tourniquet, safety pins, needles and heavy thread, matches, eye wash, a chemical ice pack and a first aid book. Rotate the medical supplies every six months.

**PERSONAL CARE AND HYGIENE ITEMS.** Alcohol-based hand sanitizer, baby wipes, small plastic bottle of pine oil or other disinfectant, six large heavy-duty garbage bags with ties for sanitation and waste disposal, box of tissues, roll of toilet paper, plastic bucket to use as a toilet after lining it with a plastic garbage bag.. (Your smaller kit items can be stored in your bucket inside a sealed trash bag). Tooth brush/tooth paste, mouth wash, deodorant, face cloth, folding cup, and other person items should be based on personal needs.

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER.** Sturdy shoes (especially if your work shoes are not good for walking), sweater or jacket, hat/sun visor, feminine hygiene supplies, whistle (to attract attention and call for help), rope or string, pencil and paper, safety pins, \$100 in small bills to buy essential supplies in case the ATM does not work, a roll of quarters for a pay phone. Add appropriate climate-related items like sun screen or gloves.

**DON'T LET YOUR GAS TANK FALL BELOW HALF FULL!** The radio and heater in your car may save your life, but you can't run the car's accessories long without the gas to start the engine and re-charge the battery. If you travel in isolated areas, on the freeway, or far from home, an adequate gasoline supply is crucial. Fill up often. After a disaster the gas pumps may not work for several days while electrical power is restored, and once the pumps work, the supplies will quickly be depleted through panic buying. **NEVER CARRY CANS OF GAS IN YOUR TRUNK!** A can of gas is a bomb!