

How to Build a Home Emergency Kit – COVID-19 Response
Bedford Board of Health – March 12, 2020

Emergencies can take many forms – disease outbreaks, extreme weather, power outages, etc. and with the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, many people are wondering how best to prepare. There are steps you can take right now to be ready for any emergency, but specifically these tips will help you be prepared if your family is required to stay home for a two week period.

The best way to prepare is to create an Emergency Kit <https://www.ready.gov/kit> ahead of time that is designed for your specific family needs. Current emergency kits should be prepared with COVID-19 in mind, where home quarantine may last two weeks (14 days) or more.

A preparedness kit should include a fourteen (14) day supply of the following:

1. Water and Liquids

- ✓ At least one gallon of water per person per day
- ✓ Fluids with electrolytes - pedialyte, gatorade, powerade

2. Food

- ✓ Options with a long storage life
- ✓ Easy to pack and require little to no cooking
- ✓ Avoid salty foods that contribute to dehydration
- ✓ Healthy options that fit your specific family needs
- ✓ Canned soup, meat products, beans, vegetables and fruit
- ✓ Pasta, rice, oats, whole grain cereal, granola and protein bars
- ✓ Peanut butter, dried fruits and nuts, cookies, and snacks for children
- ✓ For this type of emergency- frozen fruit, vegetables, meals and kids snacks

3. First Aid Kit and Medications

- ✓ Highly recommend a 30 day supply of prescription medications per person
- ✓ Over the counter medicine: pain relievers, fever reducer, antacids, cough and cold medicine, vitamins, etc.
- ✓ Thermometer (check it is functioning). Consider one for each family member
- ✓ Antibiotic ointment packs, gauze, bandages, scissors, tweezers, an emergency blanket, antiseptic wipes, and non-latex gloves

4. Supplies

- ✓ Toothpaste, toilet paper, feminine supplies, diapers for infants and toddlers
- ✓ Disinfecting wipes and disinfecting products
- ✓ Laundry detergent, paper plates, plastic cups, utensils, and paper towels, hand soap, dish soap, etc.
- ✓ Batteries – reminder to check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning

5. Other Items

- ✓ Board games, cards, toys, books, magazines, coloring books, and other fun items to keep families occupied during the time spent at home.

6. Specific Household Considerations

- ✓ **Infants or Toddlers** – Diapers and wipes, teething medication, over the counter medication specifically for children, formula and bottles, juice boxes, and band aid.

- ✓ **Pets** – Food, water, medicines, pet first aid kit, cat litter or puppy pads, crate for each pet, and veterinary vaccination records.
- ✓ **Documents** – Copies of health records, and list of medication/dosage readily available
- ✓ If a **family member** receives regular medical treatments or home healthcare services, discuss this with your provider ahead of time and have a plan in place.

In specific situations, a household member may be notified and required to isolate or separate themselves from other members within the household. In such cases, limiting contact and/or limiting shared supplies within the home is essential in order to isolate correctly. Create an individual kit for each family member with the list above. This will allow for proper isolation as well as ensuring the kit fits the needs of each individual.

Emergency situations are a difficult time for all; if your family is in need of assistance the following resources may be able to help you with your food supply:

- **Bedford Community Table and Pantry** – Town Center, 12 Mudge Way, Bedford
Hours: Thursdays 4:30-6pm. <http://bedfordfoodpantry.org/>
- **Open Table** – 33 Main Street, Maynard
Hours: Tues 3pm – 6:30pm Thursday 3pm – 6:30pm. <http://www.opentable.org/guest-programs/>
- **Emergency SNAP Benefits** – <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/emergency-snap-benefits>
- **Project Bread Food Source Hotline** - Hotline (1-800-645-8333, TTY 1-800-377-1292)
Hotline Hours: Mon-Fri 8am – 7pm Sat 10am-2pm

If you are facing a financial hardship and need immediate assistance purchasing a 14 day supply of food please contact the Community Social Worker in the Youth and Family Services Department (781-918-4328).

The Board of Health will be updating their website with most current COVID -19 response information as it becomes available, as well as Bedford specific details. Please continue to visit the Board of Health website at: <https://www.bedfordma.gov/bedford-board-of-health/pages/covid-19-coronavirus>. As a reminder, if someone in your household is feeling ill please call your doctor's office for guidance.