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DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT A SPECIFIC TOPIC?  
SUBMIT SUGGESTIONS TO:

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DANIELLE DALEY  
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OR CALL  
203-387-9332

HELPFUL TIPS TO EMPOWER  
DIALYSIS PATIENTS

# Kidney Chronicles

## September is... National Preparedness Month



**National Preparedness Month** takes place each September to encourage people to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies. All individuals, especially those with health limitations, should take the time before a disaster to plan for survival at home, in a shelter, or elsewhere in the event of an actual emergency.

For people receiving kidney dialysis or living with a kidney transplant, planning for emergencies and disasters can be the difference between life and death. Special preparedness measures to ensure health and safety during and after disasters is necessary. Now is the time to plan ahead for what you may need to stay safe, healthy, informed, mobile, and independent if a disaster occurs.

### Steps to Prepare for an Emergency

- ◆ **Make an Emergency Supply Kit:** Create a stockpile of emergency supplies, food, and medicines.
- ◆ **Stay Updated:** Keep an updated list of medicines / allergies with you at all times.

- ◆ **Create a Personal Evacuation Plan:** Develop a plan, and evacuate early when warranted.
- ◆ **Communicate with Your Facility:** Talk to the health care team about your facility's emergency care plan, including how to contact staff in the event of an emergency or disaster, where to receive back-up care, and how to get copies of vital medical records. Many facilities have toll-free numbers to call for assistance.
- ◆ **Keep Important Information Safe:** Collect and put everything together in a water proof container.
- ◆ **Stay Connected:** Provide key contact numbers to your health care team, include out-of-state numbers
- ◆ **Emergency Diet:** Know what diet to follow if your dialysis must be delayed. Get a copy of the emergency diet.
- ◆ **Secure Transportation:** Plan for back-up transportation to dialysis.
- ◆ **Access to Dialysis:** Follow the same frequency for dialysis services when possible. Services may be harder to find so don't wait too long to start looking. Following the emergency diet can help if you can't get to services for a day or two.

### Steps to Take When an Emergency Occurs

- ◆ **Stay Safe:** Ensure environment is safe and stay home unless you are injured.
- ◆ **Ask for Assistance:** Notify your dialysis facility that you are not able to come to the facility for treatment and await further instruction. If you cannot reach your dialysis facility, contact your ESRD Network for help (the NW1 toll-free patient line is 866-286-3773).
- ◆ **Follow the Emergency Diet:** Start to follow your physician's advice regarding emergency diet and fluid intake.
- ◆ **Get Utilities Up and Running:** Contact your water and/or electric utility companies if you are without power and water. Notify them of your special needs.

For more information about how to prepare for an emergency or disaster, please visit the Network website at [www.networkofnewengland.org/emerg.htm](http://www.networkofnewengland.org/emerg.htm). You can also visit <http://www.ready.gov/> for useful tools.