



**Tulane University Health Sciences Center**  
Diabetes-Specific Disaster Survival Guide

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina tore through the Gulf Coast leaving behind a path of destruction in New Orleans and other cities in Southern Louisiana and Mississippi. In the weeks and months that followed, we learned a good deal about the needs of those with diabetes under disaster conditions. In setting up temporary clinics for patients in our diabetes research studies, we learned firsthand through clinic visits and phone conversations what these patients were enduring in the absence of basic necessities and the difficulties they were having in controlling their blood sugar levels without the availability proper foods or medications. Most were completely unprepared to independently manage their diabetes and maintain a state of wellness.

As a result of what we learned, we have developed a very basic survival guide intended for use by our patients in preparation for another disaster that would necessitate leaving home or possibly being stranded at home. While we all live in hope that disaster will never strike, we have learned by hard, painful experience that preparations are extremely valuable when our worst fears are realized.

Our Diabetes-Specific Disaster Survival Guide can easily be adapted to any threatened disaster and any population group. While preparations are critical for everyone, vulnerable populations such as the chronically ill, the elderly, children and pregnant women must be prepared to manage their basic needs for a minimum of two to three days. We suggest that people spend a few minutes asking themselves what items would absolutely be needed if they were stranded on an uninhabited island for several days. What would they include as specific needs, understanding that they would need to be able to carry or pull those supplies, perhaps alone? The Survival Kit suggested in our Guide can be composed of many items that most households have readily available and will not need to purchase. Other items, which may need to be purchased, can be purchased from dollar stores for very little cost. Putting together a Survival Kit should be in the affordable price range for nearly everyone. While our survival guide offers suggestions, everyone needs to develop a list that works for him/her individually—the list is the first step in getting prepared.

# *Diabetes-Specific Disaster Guide*

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## How to Use This Guide

This guide has been prepared for people with diabetes. It is very important that people with diabetes be able to manage their blood sugar levels in spite of even a hurricane. During a disaster, good self-care becomes even more important because Emergency Rooms, Hospitals and even Health Care Providers may become difficult to access. Your ability to provide excellent self-care will be the main factor in determining how well you will remain throughout the disaster. And, your preparation before the disaster will also determine how well you may remain during the disaster. This guide has been prepared with you in mind. The index will help you to easily find the materials you need. Please take time to review the guide and put it into practice. In the event of a disaster, you will be glad you spent the time to prepare.

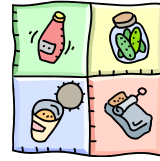
**PLEASE NOTE:** This list has been designed for people who may have to shelter in place in an emergency, If you must evacuate, it may be difficult or impossible for you to carry all of the items suggested (for example: gallons of water). In that event, take the items from the list that are key and easier to manage. These items are underlined.

### **DISASTER SURVIVAL KIT**

- v **Plastic Bin**, Waterproof with cover – Large enough to hold everything
- v **First Aid Kit**: bandages, aspirin & non-aspirin, antiseptic cleaner (hand gel), small scissors, antacid, laxative, anti-diarrhea medicine
- v **Flashlights with extra batteries**
- v **Plastic garbage bags**
- v **Battery-operated radio with extra batteries**
- v **Notebook of all important papers**: insurance policies; health insurance papers/cards; identification information; Medical records and information including list of medications, name of providers, etc.
- v **Important Phone Numbers**: family members (home and cell numbers), work, health care providers
- v **Cash** including small bills
- v **Cell Phone and chargers**
- v **Paper and pens/pencils**
- v **Non-electric can opener**
- v **Personal Items**: Toilet paper, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Denture needs, Paper Towels, Hand cleaner/wipes
- v **Medicine Kit**: Container large enough to hold all medications and supplies, medications, Cooler bag to transport insulin, Freezer packs (place in freezer until needed), Syringes, Pen needles, Glucose tablets, Alcohol wipes, Blood Glucose Monitor, Blood Glucose Monitor Supplies, Blood Glucose Log. *To ensure that the Medicine Kit is not forgotten, write "Medicine Kit" on the outside of your plastic bin to remind you to place the Medicine Kit inside as you finish final preparations.*

- v **Snacks:** Packs of crackers with cheese or peanut butter, crackers, canned cheese, jar of peanut butter, hard peppermints, juice boxes
- v **Rope**
- v **Tarp**
- v **Water:** One gallon per person per day (Carry at least a 2 - 3 day supply)
- v **Blankets:** One per person
- v **Whistle:** One per person – to be used for emergencies and to help family members locate each other
- v **Clothing:** At least one complete change of clothing per person
- v **Food:** as space is available – minimum 2 day supply. Suggestions: Ready to eat canned meats, fruits & vegetables; High energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars and trail mix; and comfort foods such as instant coffee and tea. Don't forget to pack the sugar substitutes such as Equal, Sweet & Low, or Splenda. Pack some plastic silverware, if possible.
- v **Matches and/or lighter**
- v **Additional items:** Shampoo, Soap, Razors, Sun block, insect repellent, additional food & water, books, puzzles, screw driver, pliers, duct tape, work gloves

# DISASTER SURVIVAL KIT (illustrated)

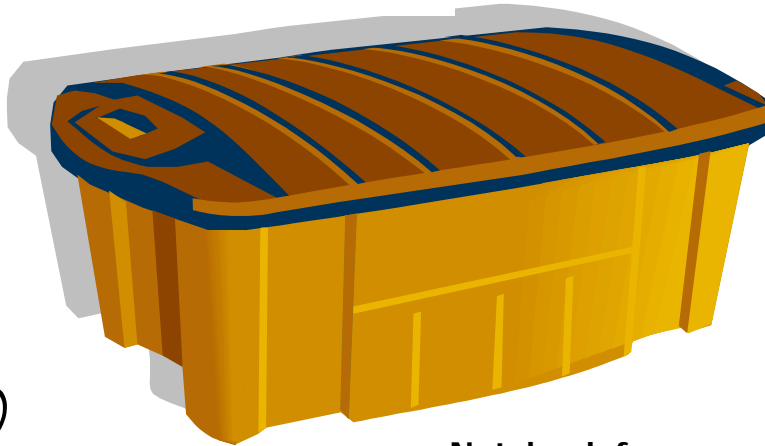


Ready-to-eat  
Foods



Matches

Waterproof Storage Bin



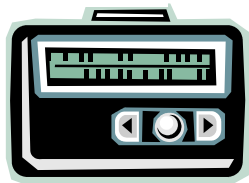
First  
Aid Kit



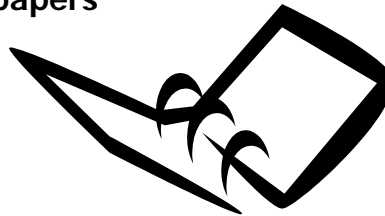
Flashlight

Notebook for  
important  
papers

Radio



Paper & Pen



Plastic  
Bags



Phone & Charger



Can Opener



Personal  
Items –  
See List  
on page 4

Cash



Snacks



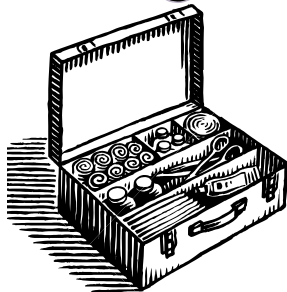
Tarp



Rope



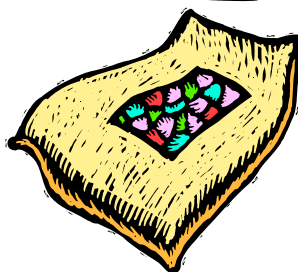
Medicine Kit  
– see  
instructions  
on page 4



Water



Blankets

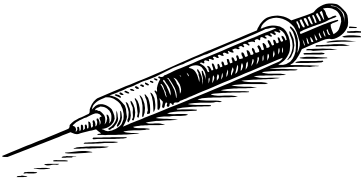


Clothes



Emergency  
Whistles





## **Insulin Tips to use During a Disaster**

- ✓ Keep ice packs in freezer to use during insulin transport
- ✓ Stock chemical "cold" packs to use after freezer ice pack has thawed
- ✓ Keep your small cooler bag available for transporting insulin
- ✓ Keep all injection supplies together so that they can be easily retrieved during an emergency. Include an extra log book and pencil.
- ✓ Any empty hard plastic bottle will serve to dispose of syringes, needles and lancets during an emergency
- ✓ Keep glucose tablets available
- ✓ Routinely check your kit to be sure it is up to date
- ✓ Monitor blood glucose regularly and record your numbers.





## Diabetes Tips for use during Disasters

- ✓ Prepare and take as much of your SURVIVAL KIT with you as possible
- ✓ Maintain your meal plan and hydration as best you can
- ✓ Monitor blood glucose regularly and record your numbers
- ✓ Take your medications as prescribed
- ✓ Wear shoes at all times and examine your feet at every opportunity. If you are exposed to flood waters, clean the exposed areas as soon as possible. If you are wounded, clean and dress the wound if possible and get medical attention as soon as possible
- ✓ Wear your diabetes identification at all times
- ✓ Eat extra food with excess physical labor (working, walking, running, etc.)
- ✓ Be aware that heat & humidity can affect blood glucose results. It is possible that your results may not be accurate. Perform quality control checks, if possible, to confirm accuracy. To maintain high quality results, follow these suggestions, if possible:

- Keep the monitor out of direct sunlight
- Enclose monitor and strips in plastic container to keep dry
- Use control solution to confirm accuracy of the results



# Remember:

Contact your Health Care Providers and/or Research Study as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to help get your medications and other needs resolved. Post important numbers here:

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## Price List for Survival Kit (for one person)

### Purchased Necessities:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Where Purchased</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Flashlight	Dollar Store	1.00
Extra Batteries	Dollar Store	1.00
Plastic garbage bags	Dollar Store	1.00
Can Opener	Dollar Store	1.00
Medicine Kit box	Dollar Store	1.00
Cooler Bag	Dollar Store	3.00
Ice Pack (store in freezer)	Dollar Store	1.00
Disposable Ice Packs	Dollar Store	1.00
Snack crackers with peanut butter	Dollar Store	1.00
Peanut butter	Dollar Store	1.00
Crackers	Dollar Store	1.00
Jelly	Dollar Store	1.00
(3) Fruits	Dollar Store	3.00
(3) Lunch foods	Dollar Store	3.00
(4) other foods	Dollar Store	4.00
Rope	Dollar Store	1.00
Plastic Tarp	Dollar Store	1.00
(2) Gallons of water	Dollar Store	2.00
Whistle	Dollar Store	1.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$29.00</b>

### Items that can be taken from your home:

Plastic Bin	Toilet Paper or Tissues
Band-aids	Toothbrush & Toothpaste
Aspirin	Denture needs
Non-aspirin	Paper towels
Hand gel	Paper & Pen/pencil
Antiseptic wipes	Blanket
Scissors	Clothes (1 - 2 changes/person)
Antacids	Sugar Substitutes
Anti-diarrhea medicine	Plastic Silverware
Notebook of important papers	Lighter
Cash	Shampoo
Cell Phone & Charger	Soap
Razor	Sun Screen
Insect Repellent	Screw Driver
Pliers	Duct Tape
Work Gloves	

### Extra Items that are important but not absolutely necessary:

Battery-operated weather radio	Walmart	15.00
Extra Batteries	Dollar Store	1.00