

SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

# MCHD HEALTH BLOG

*The greatest wealth of a community is the health of the people.*



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
MORGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.



## PREPAREDNESS FOR OLDER ADULTS

September is National Preparedness Month. This year's theme is "Take Control in 1, 2, 3". The goal of this theme is to empower everyone, especially older adults, to 1) assess their needs, 2) make a plan and 3) engage their support network to stay safe when disaster strikes. While it is important for all residents to be prepared in the event of an emergency, older adults can face greater risks when it comes to extreme weather events and other emergencies we face. Those who live alone, have a disability, are low income or live in rural areas are at even greater risk.

**Assess Your Needs.** If you have medications that need refrigeration, rely on mobility or assistive devices or have a pet you'll need to understand how these variables will factor into what you'll need to stay safe in a disaster or emergency.

**Make a Plan.** Once you assess your needs, you can modify your plans to make sure your needs are met. This can include building a kit that includes extra medication, having a way to store medications in an emergency and planning for your pets or service animals. Have multiple ways to receive alerts before, during, and after emergency events. If you don't have internet, practice using a radio with batteries for updates from local officials. Ready.gov suggest you include the following in an emergency preparedness kit:

- Contact information for important people and care providers.
- A list of medicines you need, dosage instructions, and any allergies.
- Contact information for your durable medical equipment provider.
- Need-to-know information for first responders and others who might need to help you.
- Copies of Medicaid, Medicare and other insurance cards.

**Engage your support network.** Reaching out to family, friends and neighbors can help you build a support network that can support you before, during and after a disaster or emergency. Share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your group, including a friend or relative in another area who would not be impacted by the same emergency who can help if necessary. Make sure everyone knows where you will go in case of an emergency. Make sure that someone in your personal support network has an extra key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supplies. Make sure to include your neighbors' contact information in your emergency plan.

For more information be sure to check out [www.ready.gov/older-adults](http://www.ready.gov/older-adults) for low-cost steps that help you get better prepared.