

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S  
*Herbal Legacy Newsletter*

## National Preparedness Month – 72 hour Kits

by Doreen Spackman, M.H. - Utah

September is National Preparedness month and with Mother Nature being so busy this last year - tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes etc., no one is exempt. That's okay, let's just be prepared. In our home we have had 72 hour kits for over 15 years, the contents have changed over the years and we have never used them for an emergency, but I have always loved knowing we have them just in case we need them.

Once we have initially created the kits, we take them out every 6 months. At this time we eat the food, check expiration dates, restock the food, see if the clothes still fit, and update other items as the children grow and needs change. There have been times when... one or more of the children rationalized an emergency and would eat some of the food from their kits for an afternoon or late night snack, so we had to make sure to move the kits out of each child's bedroom to another location in our home. Now the children are grown and pretty much gone, but our grandchildren are excited as we get their kits together. We have found over the years that more and more food is packaged in single servings and have easy-off lids that make it much nicer, especially for younger children. It was also fun to practice not squeezing the boxed juice (or it all comes out of the box) and other little tricks before the time comes to use them.

You can keep them as simple or complex as you would like but there are some things that are really necessary. I would start out simple and go from there. I like to put most of the items in separate gallon ziploc-type bags. Adjust this to your needs and I will explain some healthier food choices that I use.

**Back Pack-** (lightweight) for each person or fanny pack for small children, they can hang across neck and shoulder, sling style.

**Vital Information for Each Person-** put in a plastic bag. This should include, but is not limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Birth Date
- Phone Numbers Home & Cell
- Blood Type
- Allergies/Medical Information
- Parents Names & Phone Numbers
- Neighborhood meeting place
- Out of town contact person and phone number
- Family picture (or pictures of belongings/important documents on a flash drive)

**Water** - (weighs 8 lbs per gallon, so with this in mind) for children the small 8 oz. water bottles are great and bigger sizes for older people. Put in as much as you can but remember it gets heavy fast. Keep extra at

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home in case you don't need to evacuate, you can never have too much water. It is recommended 1 gallon a day per person.

**Food for 3 Days** - it is best if it requires no refrigeration, cooking or preparation. See what's on your grocer's shelf. Remember to check the dates so they last for 6 months. There are many healthy choices and for me I can't have the sugar laden items so enjoy the variety. There is canned pineapple (in it's own juice), fruit in cups, granola in packages, trail mix, I even found salsa and refried beans in small servings with pull-top lids. I have put oat groats, chia seeds, millet, and quinoa in individual bags and then in a plastic container. I put in a wide mouth thermos so I can soak any of my grains if needed. There are healthier type crackers that you can put almond butter on, I have found almond butter in single servings too. It is fun to have so many nutritious foods that we can put in our kits and feel good about when we need to use them.

**Fun Things** - a small toy or game, notepad, pen/pencils, chalk. These items go in a small bag, not the gallon size.

**Clothing** - pants, shirts, underclothes, socks, shoes and work gloves.

**Light and Shelter** - light sticks, small lightweight LED flashlight, emergency blanket, hand and body warmers, tube tent, water proof matches (please do not put the matches in children's packs), whistle.

**First Aid**- You can often get a small kit for \$1 close to the school supplies. Then add in latex gloves, small scissors, hand sanitizer, whistle, adhesive tape, band-aids, self adhesive wrap or elastic bandage, Complete Tissue and Bone ointment, cayenne powder or tincture, cotton balls and a bandanna (I use this for many things not just first aid).

**Hygiene** - wash cloth, soap, toilet paper, toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm, deodorant, brush/comb, nail clippers, feminine supplies, shampoo, q-tips, wet wipes, rubber bands or clips for longer hair. Most of these items I get in the travel size, they usually have small containers for many of the first aid items that I want to bottle into smaller sizes too (make sure you label any items that you package out of original containers).

Enjoy gathering the things you and your family need. I have often put my 72 hour kit in my car since we are in it so much. Have a fun and safe time preparing for the unexpected.

*Doreen Spackman is a Master Herbalist graduate and employee of the School of Natural Healing. Doreen enjoys helping others learn the benefits of eating well and taking care of their health with herbs.*

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