Managing your diabetes during an emergency situation such as a snow or ice storm, hurricane, fire, or even a prolonged power outage can be very challenging.

The following 6 “Tips” can help you prepare for your diabetes care before an emergency occurs.

**Tip 1 - Prepare a Diabetes Emergency Supplies Kit**
Do not get caught in an emergency situation without your diabetes supplies! Check (√) each item from the list below as you pack your emergency supplies kit.

### DIABETES EMERGENCY SUPPLIES KIT CHECK LIST
Pack at least a 3-day supply

**All people with diabetes:**
- List of medical/health conditions
- Medications (including over-the-counter medications)
- Glucose meter, extra batteries, record book, and pen
- Lancets and test strips
- Sharps disposal container
- Name and contact information for your diabetes doctor or health care provider
- Emergency contact person’s information (phone number, etc)

**For people taking pills and/or insulin**
- Quick sources of sugar (glucose tablets, juice packs, hard candy)
- Snacks such as granola bars, peanut butter, cheese and crackers
- Bottled water and/or sugar-free pop
- Sick day guidelines

**For people taking insulin injections:**
- Insulin vials/cartridges (see Tip #3)
- Insulin syringes/pens/pen needle tips
- Glucagon kit (type 1 diabetes)
- Blood ketone test strips and metre or urine test strips
- Alcohol swabs, tissues
- Cold packs/thermal storage bag for insulin

**For people on an insulin pump (include items listed above, plus):**
- Insertion/infusion sets
- Skin preps, tape
- Cartridges/reservoirs
- Extra pump batteries
- Directions for switching back to insulin injections
- Current records of your:
  - Basal and bolus rates
  - Insulin sensitivity factor
  - Insulin-to-carbohydrate ratios

To make sure your Diabetes Emergency Supplies Kit is easy to carry, accessible and up-to-date:
- Keep your supplies in a backpack, duffel bag or suitcase with wheels.
- Place your “kit” in an easy-to-reach place, where everyone in the household knows where to find it.
- Check your “kit” twice per year to **replace outdated items** (when the time changes in the spring and fall).
- When you renew your prescriptions, put the new medications in your “kit” and use the older ones for your current supply.
Tip 2 - Control your Blood Glucose Levels

Emergency situations are stressful, so you should expect “highs” and “lows” in your blood glucose levels. To maintain good glucose control:

- Check your blood glucose levels more often than usual.
- Be prepared to treat “highs” and “lows”.
- Always carry a fast-acting carbohydrate food with you to treat the lows; for example: glucose tablets, juice packs, or hard candy.
- Follow your meal plan as closely as possible.
- If you take pills or insulin, eat “extra” snacks for increased physical activity; for example, a serving of fruit, 1/2 sandwich, or cheese/peanut butter and crackers.
- Follow your sick day guidelines if required.

Tip 3 - Keep your Insulin Safe

Insulin may be stored at room temperature for 28 to 30 days, however, even during an emergency situation (such as a power outage) your extra insulin has to be kept cool and away from direct sunlight, extreme heat, and extreme cold.

Do not store insulin in your kit. Take it from your current supply at the last minute!

- Store extra insulin with cold packs in an insulated bag (such as a lunch bag).
- Do not place insulin directly on ice as it will freeze!
- Throw away insulin that has been opened or left unrefrigerated for more than 28 to 30 days (except for Toujeo, Detemir/Levemir, long-acting insulins that are good for 42 days after opening).

Tip 4 - Manage your Child’s Diabetes

If you are the parent or caregiver of a child with diabetes, be sure to:

- Monitor the child’s blood glucose levels frequently.
- Have them follow their meal plan as closely as possible.
- Be prepared to treat “highs” and “lows”.
- Carry a copy of the child’s current diabetes management instructions regarding blood glucose testing, insulin guidelines, meal plan and sick day guidelines.

Tip 5 - Protect your Feet

Conditions during emergency situations are often less than idea, so it is especially important not to walk around in bare feet!

Be sure to:

- Wear sturdy shoes/boots at all times.
- Check or have your feet checked daily for cuts and sores.

Tip 6 - Relocation to a Shelter

If you are relocated to a shelter:

- Be sure to take your “kit” with you.
- Let emergency personnel know you have diabetes.
- Wear your diabetes identification at all times.
- Keep a copy of your medical history and contact phone numbers. (doctor, health care provider, etc) with you.
- Do not share your diabetes supplies (meters, lancets, syringes, etc) with other people.

If you need emergency medical assistance, call 911

For general information about preparing for an emergency refer to:
Phone: 1-800-O-CANADA (1-800-622-6232)
Website: www.getprepared.ca (provides link to provincial emergency services management office)