

Epilepsy and Disaster Preparedness

Emergency Preparedness Personnel

Helping A Person with Epilepsy

Disasters often happen without warning and can threaten lives, especially for those with chronic diseases such as epilepsy. While people with epilepsy can face daily challenges even without a disaster, such problems as getting transportation, medications, and reliance on others are even more critical when disaster happens. Without these services, their health can quickly deteriorate, leading to uncontrolled seizures and even death.

Who Needs Additional Support During an Emergency

- Children, older adults, pregnant women
- People with disabilities and/or chronic conditions
- People with limited access to transportation
- People with limited English proficiency or non-English speakers
- People of low-socioeconomic status and individuals experiencing homelessness

What You Can Do

Here are a few things you can do to help.

Learn Seizure First Aid

For many people living with epilepsy, stress can trigger a seizure. Consider signing up for a free Epilepsy Foundation Seizure Recognition and First Aid Certification training to learn how to recognize a seizure and provide seizure first aid.

Sign up: [learn.epilepsy.com](https://www.epilepsy.com/learn-seizure-first-aid)

Know available medication access services

When speaking to people with epilepsy, ask them if they have their medications or need help getting them. Knowing where to connect people during a disaster can help save their lives. Visit **RxOpen.org** to find nearby open pharmacies in areas affected by the disaster.

Include people with epilepsy in emergency planning

Maximize your efforts by engaging people with epilepsy and the Epilepsy Foundation in your community as part of local, county, and state coalitions for emergency planning. This will help you understand unique needs and guide you on how to best assist people with epilepsy during an emergency.

Refer people with epilepsy to their local Epilepsy Foundation for further assistance

The Epilepsy Foundation has a network of 50+ organizations throughout the country to assist people with epilepsy and their loved ones.

Find us: [epilepsy.com/local](https://www.epilepsy.com/local)

3.4 million people are living with epilepsy in the United States

1 in 26 people will be diagnosed with epilepsy in their lifetime

Contact the Epilepsy & Seizures 24/7 Helpline

The Foundation's 24/7 Helpline connects people with local services and resources, including food banks, shelters, pharmacies, etc. **Interpreters are available in 200 languages.**

Call: 1.800.332.1000 or 1.866.748.8008 (en español)

Learn more: [epilepsy.com/DisasterReady](https://www.epilepsy.com/DisasterReady)



People with epilepsy should not make changes to treatment or activities based on this information without first consulting with their healthcare provider. This publication is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$500 with 100% funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government. EFA150 Rev. 09/2022 ©2020 Epilepsy Foundation of America, Inc.