

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

Communication

- Think through what a rescuer might need to know about you and be prepared to say it briefly, or keep a written copy on hand.
- For example: "I have a psychiatric disability and may become confused in an emergency. Help me find quiet corner and I should be fine in approximately 10 minutes." "I have a panic disorder. If I panic, give me (name of medication and dosage) located in my (purse, wallet, pocket)." "I take Lithium and my blood level needs to be checked every (hour, etc.)."

Reactions

- There are a number of emotional reactions that may occur or become more severe after a disaster.
- Anticipate the types of reactions you may have and plan strategies for coping with them.
- Consider seeking input from your friends, family, therapist or service provider(s).
- Be prepared to have members of your personal support network offer emotional support so you can acknowledge and express feelings.

Treatment Instructions

You may need medical assistance or even be hospitalized. Keep a copy of your emergency health card with you, as well as a copy of a durable power of attorney for health so that someone you have chosen may intervene for you.

Checklist

- Practice how to communicate your needs
- Anticipate the types of reactions you may have after a disaster and plan strategies for coping with them
- Keep your emergency health card with you in case you are hospitalized

