Emergency Preparedness Checklist

CHECK IT. SAVE IT. SHARE THE PLAN.

BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH IMPERATIVE



01 / START HERE

Your first 15-minute check

Start here. These small actions can make a big difference during an emergency.

DO THESE FIRST

- [ ] Find your health insurance cards, identification, and other essential documents.
- [ ] Check that your prescription medications and refills are current.
- [ ] Keep an updated list of medicines, doses, allergies, and health conditions in a secure place.
- [ ] Write or print key phone numbers.
- [ ] Charge your phone and portable battery; keep a flashlight within reach.
- [ ] Identify who in your household needs medication, medical equipment, or daily assistance.
- [ ] Talk with your household about where to go and how to reconnect if separated.
- [ ] Check on an older adult, neighbor, or loved one who may need extra support.

ONE TASK IS ENOUGH TO BEGIN
If someone depends on daily medication or electricity-powered medical equipment, make their continuity-of-care plan the first priority.

02 / PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION

Documents & coverage

Know what you have, where it is, and how to get it if the internet is unavailable.

KEEP ESSENTIAL RECORDS ACCESSIBLE

- [ ] Place insurance cards, photo identification, and key medical information together in a secure, easy-to-find location.
- [ ] Keep a current list of healthcare providers, pharmacy numbers, and emergency contacts.
- [ ] Include relevant care instructions, advance directives, and healthcare proxy documents when applicable.
- [ ] Make a paper backup of the information you would need if a patient portal or email account were unavailable.
- [ ] Keep a protected digital backup, and tell a trusted person how to locate essential records in an emergency.

REVIEW HEALTH COVERAGE

- [ ] Confirm that coverage is active and that your contact information is up to date.
- [ ] Check renewal notices, plan dates, and any changes to coverage or costs.
- [ ] Check whether your doctors, pharmacy, and essential medicines remain covered.
- [ ] Explore BWHI's Staying Covered in 2027 toolkit: stayingcovered.bwhi.org.

PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY
Store personal records securely. Avoid sharing photos of insurance cards, medication lists, or sensitive documents publicly.

03 / PROTECT TREATMENT

Medicines & medical devices

A back up plan matters most when an interruption could affect daily treatment.

PREPARE YOUR MEDICATIONS

- [ ] Check refill dates and request needed refills before a forecast emergency, when possible.
- [ ] Ask your pharmacist whether an emergency supply or early refill is available under your plan and state rules.
- [ ] Keep an accurate medication list that includes dosage, schedule, allergies, and any special storage requirements.
- [ ] Ask how to safely store refrigerated or temperature-sensitive medicines during a power outage. Know which nearby pharmacy you could use if your usual pharmacy closes.

PREPARE YOUR EQUIPMENT

- [ ] Identify all devices that require electricity, charging, or other supplies.
- [ ] Ask your clinician or equipment supplier about batteries, backup power, and safe alternatives.
- [ ] Know when to seek a powered care location or medical help if equipment cannot operate safely.
- [ ] Ask your utility about medical-needs programs, but do not depend on those programs to keep electricity on.

MEDICATION SAFETY COMES FIRST
Do not change a dose or use medication exposed to unsafe temperatures without professional guidance. Storage rules vary by medicine.

04 / PLAN FOR DISRUPTIONS

Outages & basic supplies

Think beyond the power going out. Internet, transportation, and pharmacy access can be interrupted, too.

HAVE A BACKUP FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- [ ] Keep a charged portable power bank or generator and an alternative way to receive emergency updates. Know an alternative route to care and an alternative pharmacy or clinic.
- [ ] Save important contact details offline or on paper.
- [ ] Identify a safe place you could go if your home becomes too hot, too cold, or unsafe.
- [ ] Plan safe transportation and accessibility support, if needed.

CHECK YOUR HOUSEHOLD SUPPLY KIT

- [ ] Keep drinking water, shelf-stable food, a flashlight, batteries, and a first-aid kit.
- [ ] Include health supplies such as glucose-testing items, eyeglasses, hygiene and menstrual products, or mobility aids as needed.
- [ ] Add infant, caregiving, and disability-related supplies that fit your household.
- [ ] Replace expired supplies and refresh stored water and food as recommended.

AVOID CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING
Never run generators, grills, or fuel-burning camping equipment inside a home, garage, or enclosed area.

05 / MAKE IT A HABIT

Care for yourself & your circle

Preparedness works better when it is shared, reviewed, and tailored to real needs.

MAKE THE PLAN TOGETHER

- [ ] Choose a primary and backup emergency contact; make sure each knows their role.
- [ ] Talk about where family members should meet or reconnect if separated.
- [ ] Check whether people you care for have medicines, transportation, and necessary support.
- [ ] Ask an older relative or neighbor what support they would need during a prolonged disruption.
- [ ] Practice how to reach help when regular phone or internet service is down.

KEEP YOUR CHECKLIST CURRENT

- [ ] Recheck prescription supplies and essential health information when treatment changes.
- [ ] Review insurance notices and upcoming renewal deadlines.
- [ ] Test backup batteries or other medical-equipment plans as recommended by the manufacturer.
- [ ] Revisit your plan before severe-weather seasons and after major household changes.
- [ ] Keep this checklist in an accessible place and share an unfilled copy with someone you care about.

READY DOES NOT MEAN PERFECT
Start with the items that matter most for your household. Every checked box is a step toward protecting your health and your peace of mind.

BWHI HEALTH RESOURCES bwhi.org | stayingcovered.bwhi.org