

What To Do In a Medical Emergency

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools



Emergencies Can Happen at Any Time

- **Plan ahead** so if there is an emergency, you can **act fast** and **stay calm**.
- **Learn symptoms** that need **urgent medical help**, for example:
 - Sudden dizziness or fainting
 - Sudden increased weakness
 - Change in level of awareness/alertness (hard to wake up)
 - Seizure
 - Hard time breathing
 - Feeling like you will hurt yourself
 - Severe allergic reaction
 - Sudden change in eyesight
 - High fever
 - Severe vomiting or diarrhea
 - Coughing up blood
 - Loss of consciousness
 - Severe burns

(Turn over for more practice tips and resources)

Always Be Prepared for an Emergency

- Practice how you will tell others when you are having a medical emergency.
- Make sure you or somebody with you can explain **ALL** your health conditions and medicines.
- Be ready to **call 911** if you or someone else is badly hurt or in danger.
- Be sure to have an **In Case of Emergency (ICE)** name and number saved in your cell phone.
- Learn about symptoms that would need 911 and symptoms that could wait long enough to drive to the nearest emergency room.
- Talk with your doctor about wearing a medical alert bracelet, if needed. Ask your doctor or search the web to find a bracelet that fits your needs.
- Always carry identification, your insurance card, medication list, and your emergency care plan (if you have one).
- Know where the closest emergency room is to your home, job and other places you spend time.

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: dsc.c.uic.edu



Practice Giving the Information Needed When Calling 911

What is the emergency: _____

Your name: _____

Phone number: _____

Where you are: _____

Emergency contact and phone number: _____
(parent, friend, roommate)

Who is with you: _____

Insurance information: _____

- When calling 911, stay on the phone until the operator says you can hang up.
- It might be helpful to write down your name, address, phone number, emergency contact phone number, and insurance information to keep near your home phone, in your wallet, or taped to your cell phone.

Putting Your Plan Into Place

- Keep a digital and hard copy. Place the hard copy where it's easy to find, like your refrigerator.
- Share with three to five emergency contacts who can serve as allies during an event. Include specifics about your treatments, health needs, behavioral considerations, medications, supplies and equipment.
- Have more than one way to access your emergency contacts/plan (technology could go down, and printed copies could be out of reach). Keep emergency contact information with you, such as in your wallet.
- Set a reminder to review your plan regularly (annually). Keep emergency contacts up-to-date.

Emergency Resources

The following resources might be helpful with planning for emergencies:

- **Be Ready: Tips for Families of Children and Youth With Special Healthcare Needs** - emscimprovement.center/domains/preparedness/asprcoe/eglp cdr/cyshcn/toolkit/beready/
- **Making a Family Emergency Plan** - www.ready.gov/plan
- **Personal Preparedness Planning for People with Disabilities** - aspr.hhs.gov/behavioral-health/Pages/default.aspx
- **Making a Disaster Kit** - www.ready.gov/kit
- **Disaster Safety for People with Disabilities**- www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/inclusive-preparedness-resources.html
- **One-Page Emergency Snapshot List** - complexchild.org/articles/2017-articles/november/emergency-one-page/
- **Emergency Information Form for Children With Special Healthcare Needs** - www.acep.org/by-medical-focus/pediatrics/medical-forms/emergency-information-form-for-children-with-special-health-care-needs
- **The September 26th Project** - www.september26.org/
- **Portable Medical Summary** - dsc.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/96-Portable-Medical-Summary.pdf
- **Emergency Preparedness Toolkit for Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Their Primary Care Team** - www.thenationalalliance.org/publications/2022/3/29/emergency-preparedness-toolkit-for-young-adults-with-intellectual-and-developmental-disabilities-and-their-primary-care-team