

EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES ~ THE MyPyramid WAY



With the unpredictable weather that many seasons bring, your family may not have easy access to food, water, gas or electricity. The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends you prepare a supply that will last for two weeks.

Pre-Planning

To select emergency food supplies, take into consideration family members' needs and preferences, storage space and the ability to rotate the stored foods into family meals throughout the year.

Buy prepackaged foods; canned, bottled or vacuum packaged that do not require refrigeration. Canned foods are the easiest to store because they require no cooking, added water or special preparations. And with a variety of canned foods on hand, it is possible to have reasonably well-balanced meals. If limited facilities or lack of water or electricity occurs, it may be practical to serve fewer dishes and more generous portions to meet your daily dietary needs.

The easiest way to prepare a food reserve is to increase the amount of foods you normally keep on your shelf. Rotate your supply once or twice a year or follow the use-by date. Store a can opener and disposable utensils with the reserve food supplies. Store opened packages in screw-top jars or airtight cans to protect them from pests. Periodically inspect all food containers for spoilage or infestation. Discard all dented containers or those with broken

meals. Remember, you can't rely on appearance or odor to determine safety of food.

Following MyPyramid

MyPyramid gives a range of servings for each food group. The number of servings needed is determined by age, sex, height, weight and activity level. These factors then determine caloric needs, but do not take into consideration special dietary restrictions. Approximate figures follow:

For Adults and Teens...

1,600 calories for sedentary women and older adults.

2,200 calories for most children, teenage girls, active women and many sedentary men. Women who are pregnant or breast-feeding may need more.

2,800 calories for teenage boys, many active men and some very active women.

For Young Children

Preschool children need the same variety of foods as adults but will need fewer calories. For fewer calories, they can eat smaller portions.

For Special Needs

Remember to attend to the special needs of infants, toddlers, the elderly, pregnant or nursing mothers and those with allergies or on special diets. Don't forget your pets.

Calorie Levels at a Glance			
Pyramid Group	Lower About 1,600	Moderate About 2,200	Higher About 2,800
Bread/servings	6	9	11
Vegetables/servings	3	4	5
Fruit/servings	2	3	4
Milk/servings	2 to 3	2 to 3	2 to 3
Meat/ounces	5	6	7

Following MyPyramid During Weather Emergencies

Note: These items should be nonperishable, requiring no refrigeration.

The recommended serving sizes are listed for guidelines only.

Food Group	Amount Per Person		Recommended Serving Size
	1 Day	2 Weeks	
Bread	6 to 11 servings	5 to 7 pounds	1 slice of bread; 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal; ½ cup cooked cereal, rice or pasta
Vegetables	3 to 5 servings	15 to 28 pounds	1 cup of raw leafy vegetables; ½ cup of vegetables, cooked or raw; ¾ cup of vegetable juice
Fruits	2 to 4 servings	10 to 21 pounds canned	1 medium apple, banana, orange, ½ cup of cooked or canned fruit; ¾ cup of fruit juice
Milk	2 to 3 glasses fluid milk	7 quarts fluid	1 cup of milk or yogurt; 1½ ounces of natural cheese; 2 ounces of process cheese. Note: 1 quart of fluid milk is equal to 3 6-ounce cans OR 14½-ounce can evaporated milk OR 3-3½ ounces non-fat dry milk or whole dry milk packages
Meat	Equivalent of 5 to 7 ounces	8 to 9 pounds	2-3 ounces cooked lean meat, poultry or fish. Note: ½ cup cooked dry beans OR 1 egg OR 2 tablespoons peanut butter = 1 ounce lean meat
Fats, Oils & Sweets	1 pound or 1 pint fats	1 pound sweets	Depends on cooking opportunities
Miscellaneous	Depends on preferences and cooking opportunities		Coffee, tea, instant cocoa; flavored beverage powders; spices & herbs

Power Outages

If the electricity goes off and you know the electricity will be off for only a few hours, simply keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Each time you open the refrigerator door you lessen the time food will remain at a safe temperature. During periods of extended electricity loss, use perishable foods from the refrigerator first. Use foods from the freezer next. A full, freestanding freezer will hold food at safe temperatures for up to three days. Food with ice crystals in the center is safe to eat if properly cooked. Use non-perishable foods and staples last during extended periods of no electricity.

Emergency cooking can be done in a fireplace, on top of a kerosene heater or outside on a grill or camp stove. Candles and cans of Sterno® could also provide heat. If matches are needed to start the cooking equipment, store them in plastic bags with the equipment.

Chafing dishes and fondue pots, as well as the food cans themselves, without their lids or paper label, make good heating containers.

Resources

- ~*Emergency Food & Water Supplies*, Federal Emergency Management Agency, November 2004.
- ~*Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency*, USDA, FSIS, April 2004.
- ~*MyPyramid*, USDA, at www.mypyramid.gov April 2005.
- ~*Emergency Water and Food Supplies*, Centers for Disease Control, June 2005.

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