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# Nutrition News for Seniors

EAT WELL

Provided by the Nutrition Division of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services

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## Severe Weather Emergencies and Nutrition Preparedness

The summer months bring us warmer temperature and high humidity. These weather conditions can often lead to threatening thunderstorms, power outages and possibly even hurricanes. Every household should be prepared with nonperishable, healthy food items. For seniors with chronic health conditions, such as high blood pressure or diabetes, meal planning needs a little more consideration.

To start, plan to create a "severe weather emergency meal kit" that includes essential nutrients. A balanced meal would include servings from three of the five food groups. In an emergency, the top priority is to stay hydrated, consume adequate calories and for people with diabetes, especially, have three meals a day spread out as evenly as possible.

### How well is your pantry stocked?

Read below to see what should be included in your "severe weather emergency meal kit." These foods are non-perishable and good sources of essential nutrients that will keep your body well fueled during an emergency.

**Healthy Proteins:** Canned tuna, chicken, and salmon are healthy protein choices, with a portion size equaling half of one can. Other good proteins include beans, nuts and nut butters, soy products, boxed milk and energy or nutrition bars.

-Sardines or tuna fish packed in water, salmon packed in its own juices and walnuts all have protein plus heart healthy fatty acids.

**Healthy Vegetables and Fruits:** Vegetables and fruit have a high fiber and water content — important for maintaining digestive health while supplying your body with vitamins and minerals. Eat any fresh fruit and vegetables first.

-Frozen fruits and vegetables are a good second choice, and if power is lost, they'll keep in the freezer for 24 to 48 hours. Canned foods offer good nutrition in a shelf-stable container. Use water to rinse away excess sodium when possible. Keep individual portion-size containers of applesauce and dried fruits on hand.

**Healthy Grains:** It's important to include servings from the grains group to make a balanced meal. Grains provide calories for energy as well as fiber, vitamins and minerals. Examples include dry, whole grain cereals, breads and crackers.

-In addition to being fortified with added vitamins and minerals, high-fiber, low-sugar cereals can be stored for a long time. Rotate your stock and replace unopened packages every six months.

**Hydration:** Although it is mentioned here last, adequate hydration is a top priority. The American Red Cross recommends one gallon of water per day, for each person.

-Sports beverages, such as Gatorade, provide good hydration, vitamins and other nutrients, including necessary electrolytes. (Diabetics must stay mindful of the amount of carbohydrates per serving and chose water more often.) Some adults will want to consider keeping instant coffee on hand to avoid a caffeine-withdrawal headache, if you are known to be sensitive.

## A heart-healthy, diabetes-friendly sample menu when power is lost!

**Breakfast**
Whole grain cereal, 1 cup (such as Kashi, Cheerios or Total)
Nuts, ¼ cup
Unsweetened canned fruit, ½ cup
Soy, rice or almond milk, 1 cup

**Lunch**
Low-sodium canned tuna, 4 oz.
Canned mixed vegetables (no salt added), 1 cup
Whole grain crackers, 4 (such as Wasa , Kashi or Ryvita brands)
Unsweetened canned fruit, ½ cup

**Dinner**
Canned salmon, 4 oz.
Garbanzo beans, ½ cup
Low-sodium diced tomatoes, ½ cup
Whole grain crackers or cereal
Unsweetened canned fruit, ½ cup

**Snacks (1-2 per day)**
Energy bar (such as Glucerna or ExtendBar)
2 graham cracker squares with 1 tbsp nut butter
Unsweetened canned fruit, ½ cup
Nuts ¼ cup
Whey, rice, or soy protein shake mixed with water

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Adapted from: http://www.everydayhealth.com/healthy-home/hurricane-preparedness-guide-to-healthy eating.aspx