



At HHS, we work every day to keep the American people safe from health threats. But we need your help. This September, we need you to take action.

September is National Preparedness Month, and we're asking Americans around the country to take the first steps to being prepared. That's why our motto this month is, "Don't wait. Communicate. Make your emergency plan today."



Here are four ways you can prepare right now:

Be Informed

There's no shortage of information and good ideas on how to prepare in the case of a disaster. Find out what evacuation routes are near you, how your community broadcasts emergency information and what emergency plans exist in places you and your family frequently spend time. Learn how other people and their families are preparing, and share your own thoughts.

For more ideas, visit Ready.gov and HHS's [public health emergency website](http://public.health.emergency.gov).

Make a Plan

Once you've gathered some information, it's time to put it to use. Make a plan for you and your family, and make sure you all can connect in case of an emergency. Test your plan with some questions, like:

- Who's counting on me, and who can I count on?
- Where should we all meet?
- Who could I contact to check in, especially someone far from the area of an emergency?

- Does anyone I know depend on electrically-powered medical equipment? Do we have a fully-charged back-up battery?
- If I get regular care for a chronic health condition, where could I go if the facility nearby closes?

A thorough plan could save your life and the lives of your loved ones. You don't have to build it alone. Visit the [National Library of Medicine](#) to find free mobile apps that can help.

Build a Kit

What essential supplies would you and your family need for at least three days? You should buy those items now and start assembling your disaster supplies kit.

Start with fresh water, food and a battery-powered or hand crank radio. You can find many more ideas at [Ready.gov/kit](#).

Preparedness shouldn't be scary. It can give you some peace of mind, and you can even get the whole family involved. Ask your children to share ideas for items to include in the kit, and you can even start a scavenger hunt to shop for the supplies. Our [Ready Wrigley](#) activity series can help get the conversation started.

Get Involved

Finally, always remember the value of a community in an emergency. Reach out to your neighbors and friends and develop plans to keep everyone safe. [Ready.gov/get-involved](#) has suggestions for how you can help in your area.

Our strength as a nation has always been our ability to come together to solve major challenges.

That's why we are all getting together Sept. 30, the National Day of Action, to practice. Gather with family, friends and neighbors in your place of worship, community center or your business, and put your emergency plan to the test. Prove that you're ready by registering as part of [America's PrepareAthon!](#)

You can also join us for a [Thunderclap](#) for the PrepareAthon's National Day of Action, which will go live on September 30 at 12 PM EST, and you can join the conversation in a Twitter Chat on September 16 at 2 PM EST. Just use the hashtag #CDCprep.

This National Preparedness Month, take the first steps. Together we can make sure our families and our communities are resilient in the face of whatever comes our way.

Sylvia M. Burwell
Secretary

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