

EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLIES



Store at least a three-day supply of nonperishable food. Even though it is unlikely that your food supply would be cut off for two weeks, consider maintaining a supply that will last that long. You may not need to buy foods to prepare an emergency food supply; you can use the canned goods, dry mixes, and other staples in your cupboards.

As you stock food, consider your family's unique needs and tastes. Familiar foods are important; they lift morale and give a feeling of security in times of stress. Include foods they will enjoy and that are also high in calories and nutrition. Foods that require no refrigeration, water, special preparation, or cooking are best.

Special Considerations

Individuals with special diets and allergies will need particular attention, as will infants and older people. Nursing mothers may need liquid formula, in case they are unable to nurse. Canned dietetic foods, juices, and soups may be helpful for ill or older people.

Storage Tips

- Keep food in a dry, cool spot (a dark area if possible).
- Open food boxes and other resealable containers carefully so that you can close them tightly after each use.
- Wrap perishable foods, such as cookies and crackers, in plastic bags and keep them in sealed containers.
- Empty open packages of sugar, dried fruits, and nuts into screw-top jars or air-tight canisters for protection from pests.
- Inspect all food for signs of spoilage before use.
- Throw out canned goods that become swollen, dented, or corroded.
- Use foods before they go bad, and replace them with fresh supplies, dated with ink or marker. Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in front.

Nutrition Tips

During and after a disaster, it is vital that you maintain your strength. Remember the following:

- Eat at least one well-balanced meal each day.
- Drink enough liquid to enable your body to function properly (two quarts or a half gallon per day).
- Take in enough calories to enable you to do any necessary work.
- Include vitamin, mineral, and protein supplements in your stockpile to ensure adequate nutrition.
- If your water supply is limited, avoid salty foods, as they will make you thirsty. Choose salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals, and canned food with high liquid content.

When Food Supplies are Low

If activity is reduced, healthy people can survive on half their usual food intake for an extended period and without any food for many days. Food, unlike water, may be rationed safely, except for children and pregnant women.

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Shelf-Life of Foods for Storage

The following provides some general guidelines for replacement of common emergency foods.

Use within six months:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Powdered milk (boxed) ➤ Dried fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dry, crisp crackers ➤ Potatoes
Use within one year, or before the date indicated on the label:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Canned condensed meat and vegetable soups ➤ Canned fruits, fruit juices, and vegetables ➤ Ready-to-eat cereals ➤ Uncooked instant cereals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peanut butter and jelly ➤ Hard candy and canned nuts ➤ Vitamins
May be stored indefinitely (in proper containers and conditions):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wheat ➤ Vegetable oils ➤ Dried corn ➤ Baking powder ➤ Soybeans ➤ Instant coffee, tea, and cocoa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Salt ➤ Noncarbonated soft drinks ➤ White rice ➤ Bouillon products ➤ Dry pasta ➤ Powdered milk (in nitrogen-packed cans)

If the Electricity Goes Out

First	Use perishable foods from the refrigerator, pantry, garden, etc. You may consider adding a block of ice or dry ice to your refrigerator to keep foods cool. Be sure to wear heavy gloves when handling ice.
Then	Use the foods from the freezer. To limit the number of times you open the freezer door, post a list of freezer contents on it. In a well-filled, well-insulated freezer, foods will usually still have ice crystals in their centers (meaning foods are safe to eat) for at least two days. Check to make sure the seal on your freezer door is still in good condition.
Finally	Begin to use nonperishable foods and staples.

How to Cook if the Power Goes Out

For emergency cooking indoors, you may use a fireplace. A charcoal grill or camp stove may be used outdoors. You can keep cooked food hot by using candle warmers, chafing dishes, and fondue pots. Use only approved devices for warming food. Canned food may be eaten right out of the can. If you heat it in the can, be sure to open the can and remove the label before heating. Always make sure to extinguish open flames before leaving the room.

Resources

The American Red Cross www.redcross.org

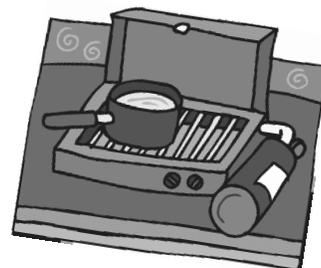
Ready America www.ready.gov

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) www.fema.gov

California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) <http://cms.calema.ca.gov/preparednesshome.aspx>

FoodSafety.gov <http://foodsafety.gov/keep/emergency/index.html>



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