

PREPARE NOW FOR THE UNEXPECTED: YOUR ER CHECKLISTS

To prepare for medical emergencies, the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) has developed checklists of how to prepare for an emergency. These are not intended to be comprehensive lists.

- Post emergency numbers on all your telephones, and make sure your children know how to call for help.** Children should be able to call 911 (or local emergency number) and give his or her name, address and a brief description of the emergency. www.emergencycareforyou.org/call911
- Organize your family's medical information.** Complete medical history forms on each family member and keep up-to-date copies in your home, car, first aid kits and wallet. Take the forms you need when you go the ER. Seniors should consider keeping this information in their refrigerators — many emergency medical services staff will know to look for this information there. This may also include past hospital records.
- Medical history forms** contain information on medical conditions, allergies, medications and contact information for your doctors. *Get your medical history form at www.emergencycareforyou.org/medicalforms*
- Add In-Case-of-Emergency (“ICE”) entries to your cell phone address book.** If you arrive in the ER unconscious, emergency staff will check your cell phone for ICE contact information.
- Wear medical jewelry** if you have a chronic medical condition or allergic reactions to drugs.
- Map the closest emergency departments** to your home, business and other locations popular to you. Drive to these hospitals to see how long it takes and what traffic obstacles you might face. In a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 — don't drive yourself. If you are able to drive, go to the closest emergency department. Don't delay care by driving to more distant hospitals. If necessary, a patient may be transferred to a hospital with special capabilities, such as regional trauma or pediatric center.
- Keep well-stocked first aid kits in your home and car.**
Home First Aid Kit
www.emergencycareforyou.org/homesafety
Travelers' First Aid Kit
www.emergencycareforyou.org/travelsafety

Your Child's ER Checklist

Nothing is more terrifying to parents than when your child has a medical emergency. Here's what ACEP recommends.

- Know the warning signs of childhood emergencies.**
www.emergencycareforyou.org/childemergency
- Complete and sign consent-to-treat forms for each child.** (Separate forms are available for special needs children.) Provide copies to all caregivers (e.g., babysitters, relatives, school nurses and teachers.) This form will allow caregivers to authorize treatment in an emergency when you are away from your child. *Get your form at www.emergencycareforyou.org/medicalforms* If possible, also include a copy of your insurance card.
- Complete medical history forms** on each family member and keep up-to-date copies in your home, car and first aid kits. If you go to the ER, take your child's form with you and also bring his or her medications in their original containers. Make sure the information includes child's immunization records and contact information for any physicians who may have treated them. *Get your form at www.emergencycareforyou.org/medicalforms*
- If you go to the ER, remain calm.** Your child will look to you for assurance and will decide how fearful to be, based on your responses.
- Explain to the child what is happening and what to expect.** Be sensitive to the situation and their age, but be honest. Keep communicating with them.
- Pack small toys and games to keep children occupied if you have to wait.** Print out a copy of ACEP's "Welcome to the Emergency Department!" coloring book. It explains to children what to expect in the emergency department.
- Bring a sleep-over bag** in case the child is admitted to the hospital. This should include a change of clothes, pajamas, a book and/or stuffed animal.

Who Takes Care of You in a Medical Emergency www.emergencycareforyou.org/whotakescare