

Food for Disasters

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Narrator] It doesn't take a huge disaster to find yourself in a situation where you're stuck at home, maybe for days or weeks, without enough food and water. Disasters include things like blizzards, power outages, tornadoes, and floods. While it would be nice to have gourmet food items on hand, you can't usually store these for long periods of time.

The CDC went into the streets and asked people what foods they would want on hand if they were stranded at home for weeks:

[Woman 1] Immediately I'd think I'd want protein that doesn't require to be cooked. So I'd think about tuna or canned Spam or something like that. I would want some dried fruit and of course water.

[Woman 2] Definitely water. Water was the first thing I thought of. And then dried nuts and of course, I have enough in my pantry that I could last much longer than a week.

[Narrator] Be prepared *before* a disaster strikes. Water is definitely important, so start with a two week supply of water. You'll need one gallon of water per household member, per day. Don't forget to include pets as household members. You can buy packaged bottled water or store safe tap water in sanitized plastic containers.

Also gather a two week supply of food that won't spoil easily and doesn't need refrigeration or much preparation. Here are some good choices - crackers; granola bars; cereal; instant potatoes; peanut butter and jelly; pasta or noodles; and any canned food, but avoid cans that are swollen or dented. Remember to put a can opener in your emergency kit.

Look for an expiration date on products to know how long you can store them. Generally, if products don't have an expiration date, use them within six months to a year.

For a detailed list of foods appropriate for an emergency kit, visit emergency.cdc.gov and type 'emergency kit foods' into the search box.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.