

Seniors

The Importance of a Personal Support Network

The American Red Cross recommends that senior citizens create a personal support network made up of several individuals who will check in on you in an emergency, to ensure your wellness and to give assistance if needed. This network can consist of friends, roommates, family members, relatives, personal attendants, co-workers and neighbors. Ideally, a minimum of three people can be identified at each location where you regularly spend time, for example at work, home, school or volunteer site.

There are seven important items to discuss and implement with a personal support network:

- 1 - Make arrangements, prior to an emergency, for your support network to immediately check on you after a disaster and, if needed, offer assistance.

- 2 - Exchange important keys.

- 3 - Show them where you keep emergency supplies.

- 4 - Share copies of your relevant emergency documents, evacuation plans and emergency health information card.

- 5 - Agree on and practice methods for contacting each other in an emergency. Do not count on the telephones working.

- 6 - You and your personal support network should always notify each other when you are going out of town and when you will return.

- 7 - The relationship should be mutual. You have a lot to contribute! Learn about each other's needs and how to help each other in an emergency. You might take responsibility for food supplies and preparation, organizing neighborhood watch meetings and interpreting, among other things.

Get Informed

Want to know what else you can do to better care for your loved ones as they get older? Download our [Disaster Preparedness guide](#) so you both can prepare for emergencies.