



Consider the following:

Taking each individual's specific needs into consideration is crucial. A certain individual's particular conditions and needs cannot be forgotten when planning for emergencies, since these needs might need some more in-depth preparation.

For example:

- Consider acquiring a medical alert system that allows you to call for help, in case you're rendered immobilized.
- Keep a reserve of the equipment you use (like mobility equipment, medical supplies, and/or lenses) outside the home; be it at work, school, a neighbor's home, etc.
 - Be sure to educate your family, friends and/or caregivers on the use and management of your equipment.
 - Place printed or written instructions so others may handle the equipment if necessary.
- Just in case electric power fails:
 - Keep a lunchbag or small fridge prepared for medications that need to be kept refrigerated.
 - Consider acquiring a generator or battery for health equipment that needs electricity to function (like oxygen tanks).



Scan here to see
the guide for people
with disabilities

Scan here to see
the guide for older
adults

**Take control over your safety and stay
protected during an emergency.**

Caregivers:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Rosalynn Carter Institute (RCI) created the **Disaster Preparedness Guide for Caregivers** to help identify possible needs that should be taken into consideration during the process of preparing for a disaster.

The three steps discussed in the guide are:

- 1 Assess your needs
- 2 Prepare an emergency plan
- 3 Involve your support network

Scan here to see the caregivers' page

This guide provides key points to be considered that caregivers can use to identify the needs of the people they care for, and how these **needs could change** during a disaster.

What should I know if I want to help?

- Identify yourself before helping.
- Move the person with care.
- Do not obstruct their communication methods or mobilization.

Remember to always plan ahead

People who are advanced in age and/or have special needs could face obstacles that others do not have to during an emergency.

It is very probable that they may not have immediate access to first responders or medical professionals. Without the necessary and adequate preparations, an emergency could turn into a catastrophe. **Inform and prepare yourself, don't wait until the last minute.**



For more information:

787-833-8433
educacion@prsnmail.uprm.edu
<https://redseismica.uprm.edu/enlaces/>

ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Puerto Rico Seismic Network

University of Puerto Rico
Mayagüez Campus
Department of Geology



Why should you prepare?

An earthquake can happen at any time. In the case of elderly people and/or people with disabilities, it's important to take **their specific needs** into consideration.

Before an earthquake, consider:

- The location and contacts of your family and/or caretakers.
- Your communication plan and alternative methods to inform others of what is happening.
- Actions to take after the emergency.
- Purchasing portable emergency equipment.

Inform yourself

- Familiarize yourself with the risks your community runs, such as: landslides, bridges, tsunami evacuation zones, etc.
- Identify places where you can protect yourself in each room.

- Drop, cover, and hold on.

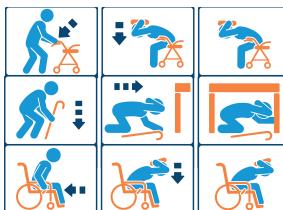


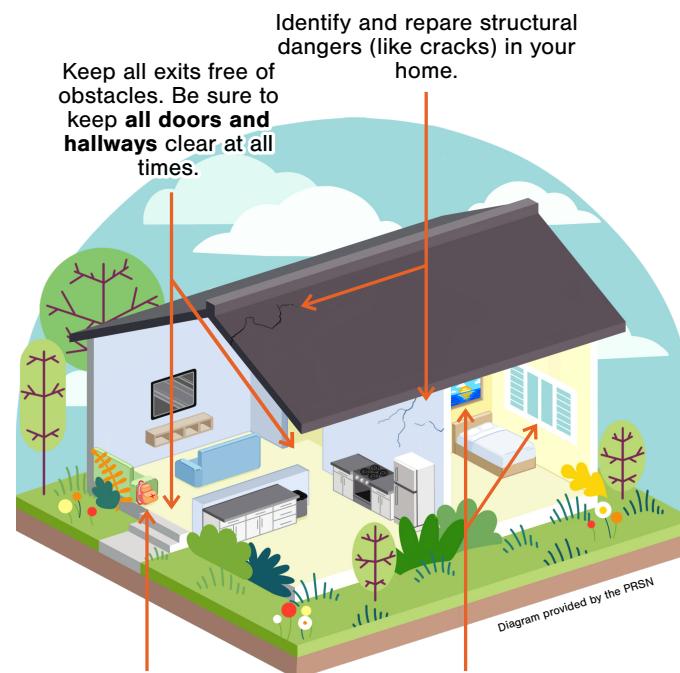
Diagram provided by shakeout.org

- Create resistant spaces by screwing and securing heavy furniture to the walls.
- Locate the assembly places and the refuges in your community.
- Keep a list of contacts for emergency agencies, doctors, caretakers, etc.
- Check if your community already has an existing emergency plan.

Personalize your plan

Having a good sense of community could be vital. Get together with your family, friends, neighbors, and/or caregivers and prepare an emergency plan based on your specific conditions and needs.

Follow these steps:



- Prepare a personalized emergency bag.
 - Keep the bag accessible and near an exit.
 - Include provisions according to your diet.
 - Include necessary medical equipment.
 - Prepare a list of the medication and equipment included, your contact information, and your doctors'.
 - Revise your bag every six months. Replace expired articles.
 - If needed, you can use a bag with wheels.
- Eliminate **non** structural dangers. For example:
 - Move your bed and all resting areas away from glass windows and things that may fall and/or break.
 - Put heavy things in low places.
 - Secure heavy medical equipment, like oxygen tanks.
 - Put safety latches on doors, cabinets, and drawers so they don't open.

Physical-motor disabilities:

- If you're in a wheel chair, put on your seatbelt during both the earthquake and the evacuation.
- Ask for help during the evacuation, especially to go up or down stairs.
- Let the person that's helping you know not to obstruct your movement; tell them not to touch your crutches, cane, walker, the wheels of your chair, etc.



Some considerations for:

People with cognitive disabilities:

- Use short, simple, and clear phrases and/or visual information when giving instructions.
- Participate in drills and **practice** your plan.
- Count out loud up to 60 when you practice your drop, cover, and hold; this could help keep calm.



People with difficulty hearing:

- Have more than one method to receive alerts, like a NOAA radio or a battery-powered radio with a screen.
- If you use devices to aid with hearing or communication, keep additional batteries in your emergency bag.
- Install detectors, systems, and alarms with lights to get your attention and warn you of the emergency, or to indicate the escape route.



People with difficulty seeing:

- If you need to evacuate, move slow and carefully to avoid possible obstacles.
- Keep additional white canes, as well as necessary equipment used for your communication devices.
- Identify all emergency equipment with braille, big letters, fluorescent tape, or any other method that may work.



Service animals:

- Keep copies of your service animals' certifications, vaccination records, vet information, etc. in your emergency bag.
- Include additional food, water, bowls, harnesses and leashes in your emergency bag.
- Prepare yourself with a plan B, just in the case your service animal is not be able to provide its services as usual.

