



## MEDICARE AND DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

- Excerpt from article by Shea Corti | [shiphelp.org/blog](http://shiphelp.org/blog)

Durable medical equipment (DME) is equipment that helps you complete your daily activities. It includes a variety of items, such as walkers, wheelchairs, and oxygen tanks. Medicare usually covers DME if the equipment:

- Is durable, meaning it is able to withstand repeated use
- Serves a medical purpose
- Is appropriate for use in the home, although you can also use it outside the home
- And is likely to last for three years or more

To be covered by Part B, DME must

be prescribed by your primary care provider (PCP). If you are in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) or are a hospital inpatient, DME is covered by Part A.

Medicare also covers prosthetics (devices that replace all or part of a bodily organ), orthotics (certain supports for body parts), and supplies. This equipment falls under the broad category called durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS).

Whether you have Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan, the types of Medicare-covered equipment are the same.

Examples of DME include:

- Wheelchairs
- Walkers
- Hospital beds
- Power scooters
- Portable oxygen equipment
- Blood glucose monitors

Prosthetics can include prosthetic devices that replace all or part of an internal bodily organ—including catheters for permanent conditions artificial legs, arms, and eyes.

Orthotics include rigid or semi-rigid leg, arm, back, and neck braces.

Medical supplies include diabetes test strips and lancets used with glucose monitors. It also includes

See DME, page 3

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According to the National Institute on Aging (NIA), "While everyone is at risk during a natural weather-related disaster or similar emergency, older adults can be especially vulnerable during these challenging times. Being prepared in advance can literally mean the difference between survival and death, particularly for those who may have special medical or mobility needs."

With tornado season and flooding in our area, it is important to develop a plan that includes possible evacuation routes and locations of shelters and discuss your plan with friends, family, caregivers, and neighbors

Gathering and protecting important documents and records is another crucial part of being prepared.

These include:

- Identification, Social Security cards, passports, birth

certificates

- Health and dental insurance cards
- Medical records
- Property insurance policies and any other financial and legal documentation
- Family or other emergency contact information

Store important documents in a fireproof and waterproof container and save a digital copy.

Whether you stay at home during a disaster or evacuate, a good emergency kit should contain the essentials you need for three to seven days. This includes supplies and backup options if you lose basic services, such as water and electricity.

Emergency kits should include:

- Water (one gallon per person per day for several days, for both drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a several-day

supply of nonperishable food) and a manual can opener

- Battery-powered or hand-cranked radio for weather and evacuation information
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Dust masks, plastic sheeting, and duct tape to help filter contaminated air
- Soap, hand sanitizer, personal hygiene, and sanitation supplies
- Wrench or pliers (to turn off utilities) and multitool for general use
- Sleeping bags or warm blankets
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
- Local maps
- Change of clothing and sturdy

See Prepare, page 7



## Pathways To Wellness Workshop

Lavana Kindle, LPC, presents Community: A Mapping Experience at Pathways to Wellness mental wellness workshop at Area Agency on Aging of Southwest Arkansas, Inc., on Friday, May 16.

She lead participants through a series of activities, inviting them to stand between each, do a simple tai chi movement accompanied with breath, then move to another table with different people, symbolizing a move to another town, and becoming part of another community. They were asked to search within themselves and discover what they could add to their community.



## Valentine's Day Celebration

Board member for the Area Agency on Aging of Southwest Arkansas, Julie Oliver, and husband, Mayor Terry 'T.O.' Oliver, welcomed seniors and city officials of Prescott, Arkansas during a Valentine's banquet held at the Hamilton-Blakely Senior Center.



some prescription medications and supplies used with covered DME, like medications used with nebulizers.

### What kind of equipment and supplies does Medicare not cover?

There are certain kinds of DME and supplies that Medicare does not cover, including the following:

- Equipment mainly intended to help you outside the home. For example, if you can walk on your own for short distances—enough to get around your house—Medicare does not cover a motorized scooter that you only need outside the home.
- Most items intended only to make things more convenient or comfortable. This includes stairway elevators, grab bars, air conditioners, and bathtub and toilet seats.
- Items that get thrown away after use or that are not used with equipment. For example, Medicare does not cover incontinence pads, catheters (except they can be covered as a prosthetic if the need is permanent), surgical facemasks, or

compression leggings. However, if you receive home health care, Medicare pays for some disposable supplies—including those that cannot be covered separately, like gauze—as part of your home health care benefit.

- Modifications to your home, such as ramps or widened doors for improving wheelchair access.

*Note: Some Medicare Advantage Plans may cover minor home modifications or other items as a supplemental benefit.*

- Equipment that is not suitable for use in the home. This includes some types of DME used in hospitals or skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), like paraffin bath units and oscillating beds. Keep in mind that Medicaid may cover some equipment that Medicare will not cover or may have different standards for coverage.

### How can I get DME covered by Medicare?

Whether you have Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan, Medicare covers your DME if you meet

the following two conditions:

1. Your primary care provider (PCP) must sign an order, prescription, or certificate. In this document, your PCP must state that:

- a. You need the requested DME to help a medical condition or injury
- b. The equipment is for home use
- c. And, if applicable, a face-to-face visit occurred
  - i. Your face-to-face visit, when required, must take place no more than six months before the prescription is written. Your provider should know if Medicare requires a face-to-face visit for the item you need.

2. Once you have your PCP's order or prescription, you must take it to the right supplier to get coverage. Be sure only to use suppliers with approval from Original Medicare or your Medicare Advantage Plan.

Note: There is a different process if you need coverage for a manual or power wheelchair or scooter.

For the rest of the article or to learn more, visit [shiphelp.org/blog](http://shiphelp.org/blog).



## Walking Track is Open to the Community

Area Agency on Aging of Southwest Arkansas had its Ribbon Cutting on Feb. 5 to celebrate the opening of the new walking track located at 600 Lelia, Magnolia. The walking track is open to persons 55 and older Monday through Thursday from 8am to 1pm.

- ANNUALS
- BEANS
- BEETS
- BIENNIAL
- BROCCOLI
- CARROTS
- COMPOST
- CULTIVATE
- DAISIES
- DIGGING
- FERTILIZER
- FLOWERS
- FUCHSIA
- GARDEN
- GERANIUMS
- GLOVES
- GNOME
- GREENHOUSE
- GROW
- HOES
- HORTICULTURE
- HOSE
- HYDRANGEA
- LILACS
- LILIES
- MARIGOLDS



- |            |          |             |
|------------|----------|-------------|
| ORGANIC    | RAKE     | SUNSHINE    |
| PEAS       | RELAXING | TOMATOES    |
| PERENNIAL  | ROSES    | TROWEL      |
| PETUNIAS   | ROWS     | TULIPS      |
| PINWHEEL   | SEEDS    | VEGETABLES  |
| PITCH FORK | SHOVEL   | WATER       |
| PLANTING   | SOIL     | WEEDS       |
| RAIN       | SPADE    | WHEELBARROW |

**COMING IN JULY, ALL THE PARKINSON'S AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS ARE SET TO GO VIRTUAL DUE TO FUNDING CHANGES.**

The Howard County, Little River County, Miller County, and Union County support groups will go virtual starting in July.

**The platform will be ZOOM**  
**Time: 2:00**  
**Day: 2nd Wednesday of each month**

One ZOOM Link will be sent out with the understanding that the participants will save that link and use it each month.

Nancy Bailey will still send out a notification on Monday before the meeting on Wednesday, including the link just in case anyone deleted it.

Despite the budget cuts, we're hoping that the participants will feel more like a community. By having all groups on ZOOM, participants will still get to interact.

**Clip-n-Cook**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 large sweet potatoes, washed and dried
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 (12 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained\*
- 1 (10 ounce) can diced tomato pepper mix, drained
- 1 cup shredded cheddar or pepper jack

\*For a soft food substitute, use refried black beans.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 425 F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper or nonstick aluminum foil.
2. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise, then brush with olive oil and salt.
3. Bake potatoes (cut side down) for 30 minutes or until cooked through.
4. Remove from oven, allow to cool slightly, and mash up potato flesh with a fork.
5. Sprinkle potatoes with beans, tomato pepper mix, and cheese so the toppings are evenly divided.
6. Return to the oven for 5 minutes until cheese is melted.

**SOUTHWEST STUFFED SWEET POTATOES**

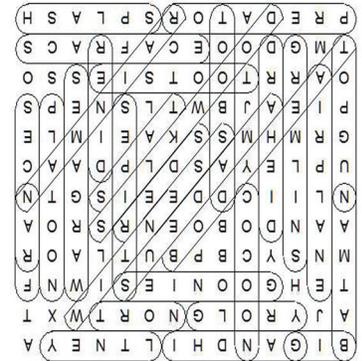
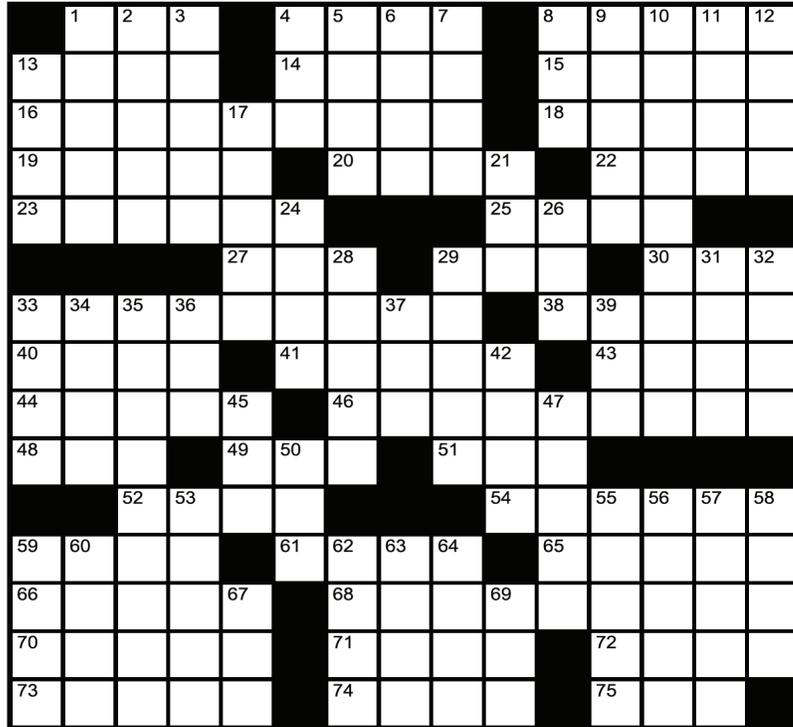
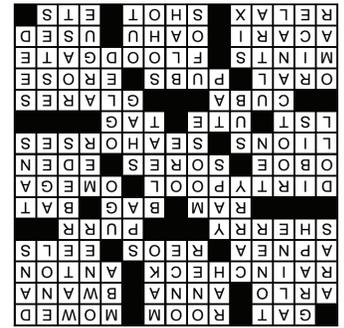


*This recipe found on aplaceformom.com*

**BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.**

Across	
1 Roscoe	27 Zodiac animal
4 After stock or laundry	29 Breathalyzer attachment
8 Did yard work	30 Halloween decoration
13 Folk singer Guthrie	33 Cheater's forte
14 Ballerina Pavlova	38 Alpha's opposite
15 Master, in Swahili	40 Mitch Miller's instrument
16 Baseball handout due to bad weather	41 Tender spots
18 Susan of "Goldengirl"	43 Shangri-la
19 Sleeping disorder	44 Big cats
20 Classic Olds	46 Aquarium creatures
22 Fish caught in pots	48 W.W. II vessel
23 Fortified wine	49 Beehive State native
25 Engine sound	51 Children's game
	52 Largest island in the West Indies
	54 Gives the evil eye

Down	
1 Profit and loss depiction	59 Like the Sabin vaccine
2 Dress with a flare	61 London favorites
3 Laser printer powder	65 Jagged, as a leaf's edge
4 Encouraging word	66 Hotel pillow candies
5 Lollapalooza	68 Most dams have one
6 ___ in a blue moon	70 Mites
7 Ocean menace	71 Home to Mount Konahuanui
8 Wharton degree	72 Played for a sap
9 Title holder	73 Chill, so to speak
10 Some are heated	74 Exhausted
11 Hydroxyl compound	75 French connections



- 24 Shriill barks
- 26 Actor Tognazzi
- 28 Yellowstone creature
- 29 Sound from the fold
- 31 "The Morning Watch" author
- 32 Beach shades
- 33 Sweetie pie
- 34 Wood stork
- 35 Dentist's suggestion
- 36 Sawbuck
- 37 Smeltery input
- 39 French sea
- 42 Lively old dance
- 45 Grinder
- 47 Like some bodies on a beach
- 50 Listening device
- 53 The "U" in UHF
- 55 Lock horns
- 56 Traditional Sunday fare
- 57 \_\_\_ Park, Colo.
- 58 Spring purchase
- 59 Poet Khayyám
- 60 It may be polished
- 62 Roswell sightings
- 63 Hardly thrilling
- 64 London district
- 67 Half a dozen
- 69 Fully anesthetized



Held the week of

6/5!

Medicare Fraud Prevention Week

# 8 WAYS TO SAVE ON GROCERIES

## Look High and Low

Stores generally stock the pricier items on the middle shelves (sneaky!), so take your gaze up and down for cheaper essentials. Now you've saved a few bucks and gotten a nice stretch! You'll never shop the same way again. Oh, and skip the aisle endcaps: Those eye-catching displays encourage impulse spending.

## Get Tech Savvy

Track your grocery needs with a digital app like Out of Milk or Pantry Check... or a simple note on your phone! Gone are the days of buying something only to come home and find you already had two in the back of the fridge.

Make use of store apps for exclusive coupons and to compare prices. And get ahead of the game by meal planning for the week on your phone, so you'll know exactly what you need.

## Be Store Loyal and Brand Fickle

Big-brand products are often more expensive than generic ones. But that doesn't mean you have to give up your favorites. Many store-owned private brands offer identical (or nearly identical) food finds at a lower cost. Snack bars, yogurts, soups, salad dressings... Stock up on store-brand staples, and turn to traditional food brands for special treats that can't be replicated.

## Get to Know the Butcher

You'll often score lower per-pound prices when you hit up the meat counter versus the prepackaged meat section. If you spot a great deal, fill your freezer for future meals. Another tip? Compare prices from the seafood counter and the frozen foods section. A lot of that seemingly fresh fish was previously frozen anyway!

## Be Wary of Pre-Prepped Produce

Fruit salad, stir-fry veggies, bagged

salads... These products are convenient and can save you time in the kitchen. But if your top concern is downsizing your spending, stick to whole produce and do the chopping yourself. Pro tip: Set aside a few hours over the weekend to get the prep work out of the way, and make use of food storage containers.

## Use Frozen and Canned Foods

Frozen and canned produce can be just as nutritious (and is typically more affordable) than fresh fruits and veggies. Freezer finds are usually flash-frozen at peak freshness, meaning they can contain even more nutrients than produce-section counterparts. Plus, there's little risk of it going bad before you use it. When it comes to canned foods, beans, tomatoes, and tuna are smart staples. Look for BPA-free cans to avoid contaminants.

See **SAVE**, page 7

## 4 Things To Know About Depression & Older Adults

Depression is a common problem among older adults, but it is not a normal part of aging. It can affect the way you feel, act, and think.



1

### Depression can be treated.

It's important to seek help early on.

2

### Signs and symptoms of depression vary.

For some older adults with depression, sadness may not be their main symptom.

3

### Friends and family can help offer support.

They can help watch for symptoms and encourage treatment.

4

### Living a healthy lifestyle can help reduce feelings of depression.

This may include eating a balanced diet and being physically active.

To learn more, visit [www.nia.nih.gov/depression](http://www.nia.nih.gov/depression).

**Stick to a Groceries-Only Policy**

You just squeezed the last bit of toothpaste from the tube, but resist the urge to pick up a replacement at the grocery store. Toiletries, paper goods, and cleaning supplies are generally priced higher at the supermarket, which means you sacrifice dollars for convenience.

It's best to buy those in bulk at warehouse club stores or stock up at discount stores. (Of course, magazines are an exception to the groceries-only guideline!)

**Become a Bulk Shopper**

Sure, those single-serve yogurt cups are convenient, but the giant tubs will save you some money.

When it comes to shelf-stable foods and dietary staples, the oversized packages are almost always money-savers in the long run.

Think oats, shelf-stable almond milk, frozen veggies, grains, spices... It all adds up.

- *hungry-girl.com*

**PREPARE** Continued from page 2

shoes

- Eyeglasses, hearing aids, and backup hearing aid batteries
- Over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Copies of those important documents previously mentioned

As you make a plan and assemble supplies, consider special needs related to medical conditions or disabilities. For example, those with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia may require extra assistance during disasters and additional help to lessen

agitation during a stressful event.

If you or a loved one require durable medical equipment, be sure to include those in your plan as well. Many types of durable medical equipment can be difficult to replace during emergency situations and may need a backup power source for essential medical equipment requiring electricity.

Reference back to this newsletter's first article for more on DME.

For medical treatments such as dialysis, discuss alternate plans and backup treatment options with your doctors in case your regular facility

is affected by a disaster. If you take a medication that requires refrigeration, consider alternative power sources and storage options in case of a power outage, and perhaps even a substitute drug. Discuss options with your doctor as part of your overall emergency plan.

For more information including evacuation tips and recovery assistance, visit [nia.nih.gov](http://nia.nih.gov).

For more information on preparing for various disasters and emergency situations, visit [www.ready.gov/be-informed](http://www.ready.gov/be-informed). Also, look for FEMA's full list of documents to consider.

# 10 Essentials for Your Emergency Kit

Older adults can be especially vulnerable during severe weather. Stock your emergency kit with these essentials.



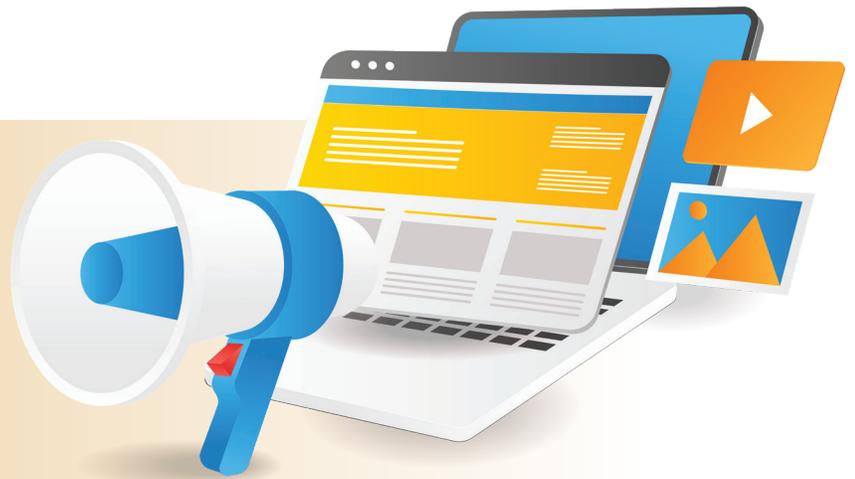
 <p><b>Non-perishable food &amp; water</b></p>	 <p><b>Flashlight &amp; extra batteries</b></p>	 <p><b>First aid kit</b></p>	 <p><b>Sanitation &amp; hygiene supplies</b></p>	 <p><b>Sleeping bags &amp; warm blankets</b></p>
 <p><b>Communication devices</b></p>	 <p><b>Change of clothes &amp; shoes</b></p>	 <p><b>Eyeglasses &amp; hearing aids</b></p>	 <p><b>Medications &amp; equipment</b></p>	 <p><b>Health information &amp; documents</b></p>

To learn more about how older adults can be prepared, visit [www.nia.nih.gov/disaster-preparedness](http://www.nia.nih.gov/disaster-preparedness).

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT!**

*Thank you to everyone that supported our newsletter. Due to funding changes, this is our last print newsletter. We will be refocusing our efforts to provide you and your loved ones with information and resources digitally.*

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