



KEY EARTHQUAKE SAFETY TIPS



FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER ACCESS/FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

During an earthquake, it is vital to protect yourself

When shaking begins, if possible:

- **Drop** down to the floor.
 - Take **Cover** under a table or desk, or cover your head and neck with your arms.
 - **Hold** on to the leg or other part of the furniture until the shaking stops.
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If you are unable to Drop, Cover and Hold

- Get as low as possible and move away from windows or other items that can fall on you.
 - If you use a wheelchair; lock your wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops.
 - Do not try to move from your wheelchair, chair, or bed during the shaking. Wait for the shaking to stop before transferring.
 - If you are in bed, pull the sheets and blankets over you and use your pillow to protect your head.
 - Always protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, a book, or whatever is available.
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People with physical disabilities or movement limitations

The shaking motion may increase difficulties for those with mobility or balance issues.

- Get to the floor in a seated position, and against an inside wall if possible.
 - Protect your head and neck with your arms.
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People who are deaf or with hearing impairments:

- Before an emergency, develop an emergency plan - including building a personal support network (see overleaf).
 - Ask your personal support network to alert you to warnings and keep you informed of updates.
 - Drop, Cover and Hold during an earthquake.
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People who are blind or vision impaired:

- Drop, Cover and Hold during an earthquake.
- Earthquakes can cause items to fall and furniture to shift. Regular sound clues may not be available afterwards. Move with caution.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

Build a personal support network

- Organise a personal support network to alert you to civil defence warnings, or to help if you need to be evacuated. This could be family members, carers, friends, neighbours or co-workers.
 - Discuss your needs with the support network and make sure everyone knows how to operate necessary equipment.
 - Inform your support team if you are travelling or away from home.
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Create a personal emergency plan

- Create a personal emergency plan which covers what you will do, how you will communicate and what you need in an emergency.
 - Plan for the different situations you could encounter in an emergency, including alternatives to aids or assistance you require (eg: where to go for assistance if you are dependent on regular medical treatment).
 - Contact the emergency management staff at your local council to find out what local warning and information systems are in place in your community. If you cannot use these systems, ask your support network to alert you of warnings and keep you informed of updates.
 - Share your plan and practice it with your support network.
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Assemble emergency and getaway kits

- Make emergency kits for your home, car and office with essential survival items and any additional requirements you have.
 - Have a getaway kit ready in case you need to evacuate.
 - If you have specific requirements or adaptive equipment needs (such as specific dietary needs, mobility aids or augmentive communication supports), include these in your planning. Consider and plan for alternatives if your usual adaptive equipment was not available.
 - Label any equipment with your contact information in case they are separated from you.
 - Keep at least seven days' supply of your essential medications and make provisions for those that require refrigeration.
 - If you have difficulty understanding, remembering, or learning, keep a simple list of what to do and important information with you, and in your emergency and getaway kits.
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Disability assistance dogs

- If you have an assistance dog, such as a guide dog, ensure it is certified with an authorised organisation, such as the Blind Foundation.
- Get a Disability Assist Dog identification tag - a unique tag worn by a certified dog to provide easy identification of Disability Assist Dog status. Ensure the dog is wearing its identification tag at all times. The tag enables access for service dogs to civil defence centres in an emergency, and will also support rapid reunification if the dog and handler become separated.
- Have a getaway kit for your disability assist dog with food, medications, vaccination records, identification and harnesses.

Information on the hazards we face in New Zealand and advice on what to do to be better prepared is available at www.getthru.govt.nz, including in NZ sign language, captions and audio format.