



## Stock up for possible emergencies

It's the season for tropical storms and so far this year Hawaii has been lucky. However, it never hurts to be prepared just in case another Iniki heads our way.

When choosing hurricane foods, keep food safety and nutrition in mind and choose foods as if the water, electrical and gas utilities will be off for 3 to 5 days. Also, make sure that special dietary needs for each family member are taken into consideration. This is especially true for diabetics. And remember to include a general multivitamin-mineral supplement.

Water is our most basic nutritional requirement. About 1 gallon of water per person per day is needed; 2-3 quarts for drinking and cooking, and a quart to use for washing. Tropical weather and the hard physical work generally following a storm may increase water needs due to increased sweat losses. Under these conditions, the gallon per day rule-of-thumb may be too low.

Three to four days before the storm, it's a good idea to fill any open freezer space with plastic bottles of water. The ice will come in handy and become drinking water when it thaws. To make sure that your water is pure and the containers are clean and sterile, simply add 8 to 16 drops of bleach

(5.25 percent hypochlorite) to each gallon of water.

Canned foods are the classic disaster foods requiring minimal preparation and cooking. It is important to choose can sizes that can be completely consumed upon opening to prevent spoiling during the next meal. Don't forget to pack a manual can opener.

We can survive for some time on nothing but canned food. But there are other simple preparations that can make the food much more interesting, enjoyable and nutritious. Here are a few tips that go beyond the typical canned fruits, vegetables, milk, meats and fish.

Dried fruits such as raisins and apricots can be a tasty high carbohydrate energy boost. Most of the dried vegetables require some cooking, but something like dried tomatoes could be soaked and chopped up to add to something like a tabbouleh salad.

Because fresh vegetables can be in very short supply after a disaster, include sproutable beans, grains and seeds in your stored foods. Mung beans, alfalfa seeds, buckwheat grains and sunflower seeds are simple to sprout and can provide many of the important nutrients typically supplied by fresh vegetables.

Most grains and other starchy

foods require cooking. There are also some starches that don't need cooking, such as crackers, pretzels and chips. A less obvious starch source is bulghur wheat. It is pre-cooked so that it only needs to be soaked in water to make a base for a tabbouleh salad. Toss in some canned olives, soaked dried tomatoes, along with a little vinegar, oil, salt, pepper and whatever, and you have a real treat.

Peanut butter is a great disaster food. It keeps well, is easy to use, and it is a very concentrated source of calories. Dry nuts of all types keep well and make a handy snack or garnish that is high in calories, protein and fat.

Other good protein sources that can keep very well without refrigeration are canned milk or individually packaged powdered milk, unrefrigerated boxed tofu and hard dry cheeses such as Parmesan.

Two items often forgotten are coffee and tea. If you regularly drink coffee or black tea, make sure to include these in your hurricane foods.

Besides the obvious comfort these beverages offer, the caffeine withdrawal headache that can occur with suddenly stopping consumption is one problem that you don't need in times of storms.

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