



For the Second Year, Poll Shows Americans Fear Natural Disasters Affecting Their Communities More than Terrorism, Global Pandemic or Cyber-Attack Combined

At the Start of Hurricane Season, Results Indicate Majority of Americans are Concerned about the Possibility of a Disaster, but are Not Prepared.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – June 1, 2017: A new survey of 1,184 adults shows that for the second year in a row, the potential of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, tornado, flood or wildfire affecting their community as the greatest single disaster individuals are concerned about. America’s concern about natural disasters (34 percent) continues to exceed worry about terrorist attacks (15 percent), cyber-attacks (six percent), or environmental disasters (six percent). The poll was conducted by international polling firm YouGov for Healthcare Ready, a Washington D.C.-based non-profit that works with the public and private sector to address healthcare resiliency before, during and after disasters.

“The findings from the survey once again highlight the importance of preparedness in the face of an unexpected natural disaster to ensure communities and families are not taken by surprise. Natural disasters do not provide ample lead time, so it is important to take steps to prepare now,” said Nicolette Louissaint, interim executive director of Healthcare Ready. “This annual poll is a terrific way to take the pulse of Americans and uncover the key areas of opportunity and weakness that are needed to help the public and private health sectors be better prepared to respond swiftly and launch an effective recovery effort to a natural disaster, disease outbreak or other emergency situation.”

The survey was conducted at a time (May 5 - 8, 2017), when topics of natural disasters, including tornadoes and flooding had been recently in the news. Among the survey’s findings:

- **Less than two in five** Americans (38 percent) could list all of their prescription details including dosage if they had to evacuate their homes without their medications or medical supplies, down from 2016 (43 percent).
- **15 percent** of Americans reported they could only be away from their medications or medical equipment for two to three days before they began to experience serious effects, while **22 percent** indicated they could go a month or longer.
- **More than half of Americans** (53 percent) do not have any emergency preparation plans in place, yet 44 percent are concerned about an emergency happening.

When it comes to deciding who is responsible for preparing their communities for disasters or disease outbreaks, responses resulted in a three-way tie between individuals (22 percent), local entities such as health and fire departments (22 percent) and the federal government including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (21 percent).

“The answers to who holds the most responsibility for disaster management shows people recognize this is a complex issue, and that we all play a part. There is the potential for confusion about who does what before, during and after a disaster. Before a disaster occurs is the time for individuals and families to understand what their local and federal officials can do to help them prepare and recover from a disaster,” said Louissaint.

One of the most striking findings for the question of who holds the most responsibility for preparing a community for natural disasters or disease outbreaks was that only three percent of survey participants identified national and local non-profit relief organizations. While many people may primarily associate these organizations with the recovery and relief efforts, the resources they provide to help communities large and small prepare for a disaster is invaluable and a core part of their work.

There are small things people can do now, to help prepare for an extreme weather or disaster situation:

- Keep a written list of prescriptions, including dosage information, in a safe space. Healthcare Ready has a free printable card at www.healthcareready.org/rx-on-the-run.
- Prepare an emergency kit with food, water, flashlights, batteries, blankets, clothing and medical supplies for either sheltering-in-place or if you have to evacuate.
- Map out where local hospitals, urgent care clinics and pharmacies are.
- Discuss evacuation plans, meeting points, and support for frail elderly family members and neighbors who may need help.
- Talking to your healthcare provider about specific preparedness actions you should take to manage health conditions (including chronic conditions) during a disaster.

The key to an effective disaster response effort is careful and consistent collaboration at all levels, from the smallest local organization to the largest government agencies. As we have all experienced, disasters are often unpredictable and cause the greatest long-term destruction when people are caught off-guard. The consistent element among all disasters is the incredible impact that preparedness and a cohesive response effort from the public and private sector can have to ensure that communities are resilient and can rebound quickly and completely.

Now in its second year, this survey provides many useful insights around what many Americans are concerned about and how prepared they feel for a natural disaster or emergency. As the convener of public and private sector healthcare and emergency management, Healthcare Ready, is prepared to help address and provide resources to help fill some of the gaps or concerns people shared in the survey.

For more information on the survey and to view the full results please visit <https://www.healthcareready.org/programs/community-preparedness>

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About Healthcare Ready

Healthcare Ready works to ensure continued patient access to healthcare by strengthening public private collaboration and addressing pressing issues before, during, and after disasters and disease outbreaks. As the convener of industry and government, Healthcare Ready

safeguards patient health by providing solutions to critical problems and identifying best practices for healthcare preparedness and response.

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About the YouGov survey

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,184 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 5th – 8th May 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all US adults (aged 18+).