

DISASTER TIP SHEET

HURRICANES AND TROPICAL STORMS

HEALTHCARE READY



PREPARING YOUR HEALTH FOR HURRICANES

FILL PRESCRIPTIONS ON TIME OR AHEAD OF TIME, IF YOU CAN

- Call your pharmacist to ask if your prescriptions can be filled early
- When filling prescriptions at the pharmacy, use mail-order delivery or call in your prescriptions ahead of time, and use drive-thru or curbside pickup options when available.
- View Healthcare Ready's blog on the refill-too-soon laws by state: [HealthcareReady.Org/A-Review-of-State-Emergency-Prescription-Refill-Protocols](https://www.healthcareready.org/a-review-of-state-emergency-prescription-refill-protocols)

KEEP A "GO-BAG" OF EMERGENCY SUPPLIES READY, INCLUDING YOUR MEDICATIONS

- Suggested items: first aid kit, flashlight, portable radio, NOAA weather radio, batteries, whistle, blankets, important documents, cash if possible, and [supplies to protect you and others](#) from COVID-19 including multiple masks for everyone 2 years and older, soap and disinfectant wipes
- Pack all medications in a resealable, waterproof bag

TRY TO KEEP NON-PERISHABLE FOOD, WATER, AND CAN OPENERS ON HAND

- Go for canned meats, fruits and vegetables that are ready to eat and can be used in a [renal diet](#)
- Protein bars, cereal, granola, and dried fruit are great snacks to have
- If possible, try to keep some food, water, and can openers in your "go-bag"

FULLY CHARGE YOUR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, AND PACK SPARE BATTERIES AND CHARGERS

- To conserve battery: limit the use of unnecessary apps and switch your phone to low-power mode when fully charged

KEEP A LIST OF YOUR LOCAL HEALTHCARE FACILITIES, WITH ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS, AND EMAILS/WEBSITES

- Consider these facilities:
- Hospitals/ERs
- Pharmacies
- Urgent care clinics
- Ancillary care:
- Dialysis Centers, Cancer Treatment Centers
- COVID-19 Testing Centers

HAVE AN EVACUATION PLAN

- Use your state emergency management agency and [RedCross.org/Shelters](https://www.redcross.org/shelters) to find local shelters
- Identify back-up locations, such as the homes of loved ones or motels
- If you have pets, look for places that accept pets
- Plan several routes to your alternative locations
- Use [RxOpen.org](https://www.rxopen.org) to locate pharmacies near your alternative location
- Follow the instructions of local officials
- Have a communication and reunification plan with everyone in your home
- If you are unable to evacuate, alert local emergency management officials and your loved ones or caretakers

- If you need to stay at a shelter or evacuate, practice [COVID-19 public shelter safety precautions](#) and general [COVID-19 safety precautions](#) on transportation like wearing a mask, washing hands often with soap and water, and staying six feet apart from others.
 - Pay close attention to local guidelines about updated evacuation plans and emergency sheltering.
- MAKE SURE YOU KNOW YOUR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION AND HEALTH INFORMATION - USE RX ON THE RUN TO KEEP A LIST OF YOUR PRESCRIPTIONS**
- [Rx on the Run](#) is a personalized wallet-sized card that lists your prescriptions with the latest dosage and instructions
 - Visit HealthcareReady.org/Rx-on-the-Run to fill yours out!
- PLAN FOR ANY CHRONIC CONDITIONS YOU MAY HAVE**
- **Diabetes:** Talk to your pharmacist about keeping a supply of insulin on hand - Try to refrain from eating sugar and other carbohydrates
 - **Kidney disease:** Make sure you have access to dialysis treatment and use the [renal diet](#)
 - **Cardiovascular disease & hypertension:** Try to refrain from high-salt and fatty food and aim for 30 minutes of activity a day to manage your blood pressure
 - **Pulmonary disease:** Work with your supplier to understand options for keeping resupplies of oxygen with you
 - **Disability:** Develop alternative transportation plans and identify a trusted caretaker if necessary
 - **Aging:** Post emergency numbers near every house phone and cellular phone
 - **Asthma:** Have a plan to ensure you have a supply of your asthma medications and supplies
- **Cancer:** If you have a [cancer survivorship care plan](#), keep a copy handy and take steps to lower your risk for infections
- STAY INFORMED OF ANY UPDATES TO YOUR LOCAL WEATHER FORECAST**
- Check your local weather channel, website, or social media for the latest weather updates
 - Be aware of [hurricane preparedness plans](#) such as, insurance checkup, strengthening your homes, helping neighbors, determining risks, and assembling disaster supply kits
- FILL YOUR PRESCRIPTIONS ON TIME OR AHEAD OF TIME, IF YOU CAN**
- Call your pharmacist to ask about early prescription refills, and use mail-order delivery, drive-thru, or curbside pick-up options
 - View Healthcare Ready's blog on the [refill-too-soon-laws](#) by state to learn more about how emergency declarations can allow for greater flexibility to accessing your medications
- KEEP A LIST OF HELPFUL HOTLINES**
- **Healthcare Ready:** 1-866-247-2694
 - **American Diabetes Association:** 1-800-342-2283
 - **American Heart Association:** 1-800-242-8721
 - **American Stroke Association:** 1-888-478-7653
 - **Red Cross:** 1-800-733-2767
 - **American Association of People with Disabilities:** 1-800-840-8844
 - **FEMA Disaster Assistance Helpline:** 1-800-621-3362 (or text "TalkWithUS" to 66746)
 - **Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER):** 1-866-901-3773

PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH DURING A HURRICANE

MAKE SURE YOUR MEDICATIONS REMAIN STABLE

- Some medicines must remain within a certain temperature range
- Tip: Insulin [can remain stable](#) between 59°F and 86°F for up to 28 days

USE [RXOPEN.ORG](#) TO FIND OPEN PHARMACIES NEAR YOU

BEWARE OF FLOODWATER CONTAMINANTS

- Do not drink floodwater
- Do not cook, clean, or brush teeth with floodwater
- Do not use medication or eat food that has been contaminated with floodwater
- Cover open wounds and limit exposure to floodwater, especially if you have cancer or are otherwise immunocompromised

DRINK PLENTY OF BOTTLED WATER AND AVOID SKIPPING MEALS OR EATING SPOILED FOOD

- Eat nutrient-rich, non-perishable foods such as fruits and vegetables
- Perishable foods in the refrigerator will be unsafe to eat after 4 hours without power
- Use dry or block ice to keep your refrigerator cold for longer or use an extra cooler

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM ANIMALS AND PESTS

- When outside, dress in clothing that covers arms, legs, and feet, and use EPA-registered insect repellent with DEET or Picaridin
- Stay away from wild or stray animals and call 911 or your public health department to report them
- Remove potential food, water, and shelter sources that may attract rodents
- If a person is bitten: Keep still, try to remain calm, and contact 911 or call local emergency services
- Lay bitten person [down and keep bite below heart level](#), wash the wound with warm, soapy water, and cover the bite with a clear, dry dressing

RECOGNIZE SYMPTOMS OF FOOD- OR WATERBORNE-ILLNESS

- If you experience vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain, contact a healthcare provider immediately

DO NOT RUN GAS-POWERED GENERATORS, GRILLS, OR HEATERS INDOORS (GAS BUILD UP CAN BE LETHAL!)

- Keep gas-powered equipment outside and at least 20 feet from any windows, doors or vent to prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning
- When using gas-powered equipment, used battery-operated CO detector
- If your CO detector starts to beep, immediately leave your home and contact 911

RECOVERING AFTER A HURRICANE

DISPOSE OF FOOD AND MEDICINE THAT MAY HAVE SPOILED OR BEEN CONTAMINATED WITH FLOODWATER

- Without power, perishable foods only last for 4 hours in the refrigerator and 24-48 hours in the freezer

CHECK HOME FOR MOLD, GAS LEAKS, AND INSECTS

- Mold can cause irritation and inflammation of existing respiratory conditions, like asthma
- Poisonous and disease-carrying insects are more common after floods

DISINFECT COOKING AND EATING SURFACES

- Use boiling water or a solution of one-tablespoon bleach to one-gallon clean water to clean pots, pans, countertops, dishes and silverware

USE CAUTION WHEN CLEANING UP DEBRIS AND DON'T OVEREXERT YOURSELF

- Always wear gloves, masks, and protective eyewear, and beware of glass, nails, and other sharp objects
- If you are cut or scraped, clean and disinfect the wound thoroughly and keep it covered, especially if you have cancer or are otherwise immunocompromised

CONTACT FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE SAFE

- Check in on your loved ones that may need support
- Use text messages instead of phone calls because phone lines might be down
- When checking up on friends and family, don't forget to continue practicing [COVID-19 safety precautions](#) like wearing a mask, washing hands often with soap and water, and staying six feet apart from others.

CHECK WITH YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDER FOR EMERGENCY SUPPORT RESOURCES AND HOTLINES

- Start by calling the number on the back of your insurance card for assistance
- If you don't have insurance, call 2-1-1 and ask about local services that may be able to help
- If there is a disaster declaration, you can also try to apply for FEMA Disaster Assistance for financial support by calling 800-621-3362 or visiting [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disaster-assistance)



COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER TIPS

□ STAY CONNECTED WITH PATIENTS AND STAFF

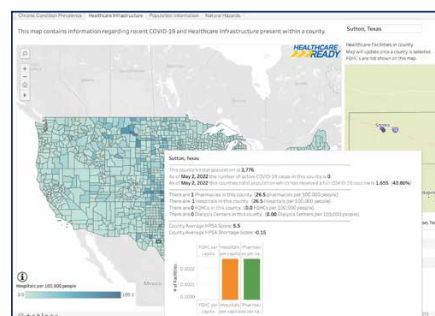
- Notify your patients, staff, and broader community about your operation status through email, text, social media messaging, or other methods
- Plug into your local health department and PCA's information sharing networks to keep them up-to-date on your operating status as well as other emergency needs
- Connect with local shelters for evacuated communities to help your CHC account for all patients and staff during a hurricane and to assess ongoing health needs
- Amplify your messaging through social media to ensure you are reaching a wide range of audiences, or so that you can connect with other community organizations who are also supporting affected patient groups
- Visit Healthcare Ready's [Community Health Center resource page](#) for more information on emergency preparedness trainings

□ PLAN FOR POSSIBLE DISRUPTIONS TO MEDICAL SUPPLY DELIVERY

- Connect with your primary or secondary supply vendors to understand which materials or products may be in short supply, and how your CHC can plan accordingly
- Sign up for updates from organizations like [Direct Relief](#) to find out about available supplies for donation such as water, medical supplies, or hygiene products
- Sign up for updates from response organizations like [Healthcare Ready](#) to get information on available donations for your health center or the community
- If you are experiencing supply shortages, connect with other health facilities in your region or your local Health Care Coalition to understand opportunities for resource sharing or resource support

□ IDENTIFY COMMUNITIES AT HIGHER RISK FOR IMPACTS FROM DISASTER WITH THE COMMUNITY DISASTER RESILIENCE TOOL (CDRT)

- The [CDRT](#) is a free, online tool that illustrates community characteristics for chronic condition prevalence, healthcare infrastructure (i.e., hospitals and dialysis centers), natural hazard risks, and other population demographics
- Start by deciding on a subject of interest (tabs at the top) and select your region to learn more about factors that contribute to disaster risk and resilience of the communities near you



□ BEGIN RECOVERY PHASE

- Notify your PCA, patients, staff, and broader community about your operation status
- Reference this [recovery checklist for health centers](#) from FEMA to understand where to start and where to request assistance
- Plug into long term recovery group meetings with [local voluntary organizations active in disasters](#) (VOADs) to communicate with other organizations who are responding or supporting
- Plan for your CHC to conduct – or participate in – an After Action Review (AAR), reflecting on your center's response to a recent disaster and opportunities for improvement. Update your emergency plans and response protocols as needed