

DISASTER TIP SHEET

FLOODS

HEALTHCARE READY



PREPARING YOUR HEALTH FOR FLOODS

- ❑ **IF YOU LIVE IN FLOOD-PRONE REGIONS (LIKE LOW-LYING AREAS ADJACENT TO A RIVER, LAGOON, LAKE, OR COASTAL AREAS), SIGN UP FOR FLOOD WARNING SYSTEMS AND MAKE SURE YOU KNOW HOW THE FLOOD SIREN SOUNDS**
 - You can follow [Weather.gov/Alerts](https://www.weather.gov/alerts) for alerts
 - Understand the warning signs and sounds of a flood
 - Know the difference between a flood watch and a warning
 - **Flood watch:** This means current weather conditions could lead to flood – this is the time to head to a safe location on higher ground
 - **Flood warning:** This means a flood is occurring – this is the time to seek shelter on higher ground, immediately
- ❑ **PRACTICE USING A SAFE SHELTER OR ALTERNATIVE LOCATION ON HIGHER GROUND**
- ❑ **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: <https://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:
 - o Dialysis Centers, Cancer Treatment Centers
 - COVID-19 Testing Centers
 - Community Health 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](https://www.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

□ KEEP A LIST OF HELPFUL HOTLINES

- **Healthcare Ready:** 1-866-247-2694
- **FEMA Disaster Assistance Helpline:** 1-800-621-3362
- **Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990 (or text "TalkWithUS" to 66746)
- **Kidney Community Emergency Response (KCER):** 1-866-901-3773
- **Red Cross:** 1-800-733-2767
- **American Diabetes Association:** 1-800-342-2283
- **American Heart Association:** 1-800-242-8721
- **American Association of People with Disabilities:** 1-800-840-8844
- **American Stroke Association:** 1-888-478-7653

PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH DURING A FLOOD

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](https://www.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

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!)

RECOVERING AFTER A FLOOD

- AVOID DRIVING THROUGH FLOODED AREAS AND STANDING WATER. AS LITTLE AS SIX INCHES OF WATER CAN CAUSE YOU TO LOSE CONTROL OF YOUR VEHICLE**
- 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](#)