

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND PREPARATIONS

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, inclement weather or emergency, we have an emergency management plan to continue necessary patient services. We will make every effort to continue home care visits to our patients, including those who live in an assisted living facility or adult family care home. However, the safety of our staff must be considered. When roads are too dangerous to travel on, our staff will try to contact you by phone to let you know that they are unable to make your visit that day. Visits will resume when conditions allow. If you must relocate to a special needs shelter or other location, we will make every effort to provide the same type and quality of home care services you received prior to your relocation. **You must notify us of location changes.**

In case of bad weather or other situations that may prevent our staff from reaching you, turn to your local radio or TV station(s) or check local news websites. Listen/watch for official information and follow the instructions provided by emergency response personnel. Based on what is known about the threat, you may be asked to take shelter, go to a specific location or evacuate the area. Please notify our office if you evacuate to another location or emergency shelter.

DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECK LIST

General:

- At least two weeks' supply of medication, medical supplies used regularly and a list of allergies
- List of the style, serial number and manufacturer information of required medical devices
- Flashlight (Do not use candles and be sure to have enough batteries)
- Radio (Battery-operated or hand-cranked radio, a NOAA weather radio)
- Cash (Banks and ATMs may not be available after a storm)

First Aid:

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| • First aid manual | • Sewing needle | • Sunscreen |
| • Sterile adhesive bandages of different sizes | • Moistened towelettes | • Aspirin or other pain reliever |
| • Sterile gauze pads | • Antiseptic | • Anti-diarrheal medicine |
| • Hypoallergenic adhesive tape | • Thermometer | • Antacid |
| • Triangular bandages | • Tube of petroleum jelly | • Laxative |
| • Scissors | • Safety pins | • Cotton balls |
| • Tweezers | • Soap | • Q-tips |
| | • Latex gloves | |

Important Documents:

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| • Insurance cards | • Credit card numbers | • Copy of Social Security Card |
| • Medical records | | |
| • Bank numbers | | |

Medcare Hospice | Emergency Preparedness Guide

- Copies of birth and/or marriage certificates
- Other personal documents
- Set of car, house, and office keys
- Service animal I.D., veterinary records and proof of ownership
- Information about where you receive medication, the name of the drug, and dosage
- Copy of will (*Items should be kept in a waterproof container*)

Special Need Items:

Be sure to include special items for infants, small children, the elderly and those family members with a disability

Phone Numbers:

Maintain a list of important phones numbers including county emergency management office, evacuation sites, doctors, banks, schools, vet, a number for an out-of-town contact, family and friends

Food and Water:

- Food (Enough for at least seven days, Nonperishable packaged or canned food and beverages, snack foods, juices, baby food and any special dietary items)
- Non-electric can opener
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Plastic cups
- Utensils
- Water

Vehicle:

- Keep your motor vehicle tanks filled with gasoline

Clothing:

- Include seasonal or rain gear and sturdy shoes or boots

COVID-19 Supplies:

- Face masks
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer

Pet Care Items:

- Pet food and water
- Proper identification
- Medical records/microchip info
- A carrier or cage
- Muzzle and leash
- Water and food bowls
- Medications
- Supplies for your service animal

HURRICANE

Preparation is the key to surviving a hurricane. Stay informed of the storm's path and its anticipated arrival. Be prepared for floods, high winds and damage to buildings and landscapes. Move anything that is outside to a waterproof place. Cover windows with wood, shutters or masking tape. Fill your clean bathtub with water. Evacuate to a shelter if necessary. Follow the instructions of your

county's emergency operations center. Many counties have mandatory evacuations, depending on hurricane category classification.

PREPARING TO EVACUATE YOUR RESIDENCE DURING A HURRICANE OR OTHER EMERGENCY

During emergencies, such as a hurricane, the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will often open shelters and/or special needs shelters. Criteria for each shelter is based on the patient's medical conditions. Our team will help you determine the best option for you and assist with your registration if necessary.

In preparation for an emergency, such as a hurricane, our team will contact you well before the emergency to determine your plans and to ensure that you have what you will need if you choose to evacuate your home to another location or shelter. Contact your hospice team as soon as possible after storm warnings or evacuation orders are issued if you are not at home.

Persons who should evacuate are those who:

1. Live in a mobile home or designated evacuation zone.
2. Receive medications or fluids by infusion (IV fluids or medications).
3. Are dependent on supplemental oxygen (oxygen concentrators or portable oxygen tanks).
4. Are receiving tube feedings.
5. Are dependent on any type of medical equipment operating on electricity.
6. Live alone or with a frail caregiver.

If you are in one of the above categories, evacuation is recommended whether you live in a specified evacuation zone or not. The reason for this is to ensure your medications, IV fluids and other needed services and supplies will be available to you. Roads may be inaccessible and phone lines may be down. Your electricity may be off; therefore, oxygen and other equipment will not continue to function. During an emergency, staff may not be able to make visits so it's important that you consider plans to evacuate when you can do so.

BRING THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIES WITH YOU IF YOU ARE EVACUATING YOUR HOME (AS APPLICABLE):

One caregiver is usually required in a shelter. Your caregiver should also bring the items below:

- All medications from home
- Patient handbook and any additional written information or personal health records regarding your care, i.e., advance directives or Do Not Resuscitate Order
- Personal hygiene items and change of clothing/shoes
- Important documents (in an envelope marked with your name and phone number)
- An adequate supply of bedding, including pillows and blankets (it is often cold in the shelter)
- Non-perishable food, any special food needs and drinking water
- Dressing supplies, diapers, pads, and other needed hygiene items
- Formula for tube feedings, feeding pump
- Nebulizer and supplies
- Portable oxygen tank – do not bring your concentrator

- Suction machine and supplies
- IV pole, bags of infusion fluids, medications for infusion and infusion supplies

ADVICE FOR PATIENTS WHO ARE NOT IN ONE OF THE ABOVE EVACUATION CATEGORIES AND FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO EVACUATE:

1. Place your electric bed in a comfortable position. If there is a power failure, the manual crank will be the only way to change the position of the bed.
2. Use your oxygen concentrator if power is available. Use portable oxygen sparingly, as no additional tanks can be delivered during the storm.
3. “Stock up” needed food, water and supplies. You should plan for at least a seven-day supply.
4. If you receive medications from hospice, at least a seven-day supply will be delivered to you before the storm. If you receive medications from another source, your nurse will ask your doctor to order an extra supply before the storm. Arrange to pick them up in your usual manner.
5. Contact our team as soon as possible to let them know your location and condition.
6. If emergency help is needed, call our team first. If our team cannot be reached, call 911. However, once sustained winds reach 40 mph, they will not be able to respond until the storm has subsided.

YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CONTACT OUR TEAM OR OTHER ASSISTANCE DURING THE STORM OR IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER.

Hospice staff will attempt to get to you as soon as possible after the emergency.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES, IF IT IS NOT SAFE FOR YOU, IT IS NOT SAFE FOR YOUR PET. PLAN AHEAD TO HELP YOUR PET SURVIVE A DISASTER.

- ID your pet. Make sure your pet is wearing a securely fastened collar with up-to-date identification including your cell phone number. Consider having your pet microchipped. For caged pets, attach identification to the cage.
- Put together a pet disaster kit. Food and water for at least five days for each pet, bowls, manual can opener, medications, medical records and vaccination schedules, leashes, harnesses and carriers, waste collections and disposal supplies, current photos of you with your pets to help others identify them in case you and your pets become separated, and written information about feeding schedules and behavior issues.
- Plan ahead to take your pet with you in an evacuation. With the exception of service animals, pets usually are not allowed in public shelters. Identify the hotels that will accept you and your pets in an emergency and prepare a list with phone numbers. Call ahead for reservations if you know you may need to evacuate. Ask if no-pet policies can be waived in an emergency.
- Identify friends, boarding facilities, animal shelters or veterinarians that can care for your pet in an emergency.

Pets may not be permitted in shelters so it's important to have a secondary plan for them to include their needed supplies.

It is important to remember this will be a busy time for all involved. **Do not wait until the last minute to prepare.** Please contact our team as soon as possible for assistance if they have not contacted you.

Do not “put off” going to the shelter until the last minute. Ambulances and county vehicles that will be evacuating patients who have no transportation will be very busy and need to plan their pickups to make the best use of their time. Emergency vehicles will not be on the road once sustained winds reach 40 mph. Please evacuate when you are advised. There may not be a second chance to leave.

While we realize it may be a great inconvenience to evacuate your home, **this is the only way we can assure your continued care and supply of medications or other needed supplies.**

POWER OUTAGE

It is important to be prepared for a lack of electricity.

- Keep flashlights with extra batteries for every household member.
 - Keep at least a one-week supply of nonperishable food and water.
 - Have an alternate plan (such as a cooler and ice packs) if you rely on refrigerated medicines.
 - Check the refrigerator temperature when the power is restored. Throw out food if the temperature is 40°F or higher.
 - Determine whether your home phone will work in a power outage.
 - Keep mobile phones and other battery-powered equipment charged.
 - Keep gas tanks and cans full.
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LIGHTNING

If you are inside:

- Avoid tubs, faucets and sinks because metal pipes conduct electricity.
- Stay away from windows.
- Avoid using phones with cords except for emergencies.

If you are outside:

- Avoid natural lightning rods such as tall trees in open areas.
 - Move a safe distance away from anything metal.
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FLOOD

Be aware of flood hazards, especially if you live in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam. Flooding can take days to happen, but flash floods produce raging waters in minutes. Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet.

- Avoid moving water if you must walk in a flooded area. Use a stick to test if the ground is firm enough to walk on.
- Be ready to evacuate if a flood watch is issued. Move important items upstairs.

- Fill a clean bathtub with water in case water becomes contaminated or is shut off.
- Turn off your utilities at the main valves if you are instructed to do so.
- Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

TORNADO

As soon as a tornado is sighted:

- Go to the lowest floor and find an interior room. Good shelters are basements, rooms and halls with no outside walls, bathtubs and spaces under the stairs.
- Many public buildings have designated shelter areas.
- Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls.
- Get under a sturdy item, such as a table, and protect your head. Stay until the danger passes.

If the patient is bedbound:

- Move the bed as far from windows as you can. Use heavy blankets or pillows to protect the head and face.

If you are in a vehicle, trailer or mobile home:

- Get out immediately and go to a sturdy structure.
- If there is not one close by, lie flat in the nearest ditch and cover your head.
- Do not try to out-drive a tornado. They are erratic and move swiftly.

HOT WEATHER

There is a higher risk for heat-related illness in the summer. When it's hot outside:

- Never leave anyone sitting in a closed, parked car.
- Drink lots of water even if you are not thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Stay inside, and out of the sun. Stay on the lowest floor, pull shades over the windows and use fans if you do not have air conditioning.
- Mist or sponge yourself frequently with cool water.
- Use sunscreen.
- Wear hats and clothes that are loose and lightweight. Clothes with light colors will deflect the sun's energy.
- Talk to your doctor about how sun and heat exposure will affect you if you take drugs such as diuretics or antihistamines.
- Move to a cool place at the first sign of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headache, cramps). Rest and slowly drink a cool beverage. Seek medical attention immediately if you do not feel better.

EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

An emerging infectious disease is a contagious infection whose incidence has increased in recent years and could continue to increase in the future. Some examples are measles, Ebola, Zika, COVID-19, etc.

Preventing an emerging infectious disease:

- Ask your physician if your immunizations are up-to-date and if you need additional vaccinations.
- Wear a face mask to reduce spreading germs if you are sick, or to avoid coming in contact with contagious germs if others around you are sick.
- Follow the practices listed in the Infection Prevention and Control section of this booklet.

CHEMICAL EXPOSURE

In the event of exposure to a hazardous chemical, item or poison, follow these safety steps:

- Seek medical attention for screening and professional treatment.
- Drink only stored water.
- If you are outdoors, get as far away as possible from the contaminant by moving upwind (and uphill if possible) from it.
- If you are indoors, close doors and windows tightly, shut off the heating and air conditioning and close fireplace dampers. Tape plastic over any windows in the room and use duct tape around the windows and doors to make an unbroken seal. Also, tape over any vents into the room and seal any electrical outlets or other openings. Sink and toilet drain traps should have water in them so you can use the sink and toilet as usual.

Remove possible contamination from your person by:

- Removing any exposed clothing (avoid touching any contaminated areas) as quickly as possible. Cut off clothing rather than pulling it over your head.
- Washing contaminants from your skin with large amounts of soap and water as quickly as possible.
- If your eyes are burning or your vision is blurred, rinse your eyes with plain water for 10 to 15 minutes. If you wear contacts, remove them and put them with the contaminated clothing. Do not put the contacts back in your eyes. If you wear eyeglasses, decontaminate them with household bleach, then rinse and dry.
- Disposing of contaminated clothing. Avoid touching contaminated areas of the clothing by wearing gloves or using tongs, tool handles, etc., and place it and anything that touched the contaminated clothing inside a plastic bag. Seal the bag and then seal that bag inside another plastic bag.
- Dress in clothing that is not contaminated. Since clothing stored in a drawer or closet is unlikely to be contaminated, this will be your safest choice.
- When you leave your shelter-in-place location, follow instructions from local emergency coordinators to make your home safe again and to avoid any contaminants outside.

EXPLOSION

- Get under a sturdy table or desk if things are falling around you. When they stop falling leave quickly, watching for falling debris.
- Stay low if there is smoke and check for fire or other hazards such as damaged floors and stairs.

- Do not stop to retrieve personal possessions or make phone calls.
- Do not use elevators.
- Check for fire and other hazards.
- Once you are out, do not stand in front of windows, glass doors or other potentially hazardous areas.
- Move away from sidewalks or streets to be used by emergency officials or others still exiting the building.
- Make any noise you can if you are trapped or shine a flashlight. Shouting only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.
- Avoid unnecessary movement so you do not kick up dust.
- Cover your nose and mouth with anything you have on hand.

BIOLOGICAL THREAT

The first evidence of an attack may be when you notice symptoms of the disease caused by exposure to an agent. It may take time for public health officials to determine exactly what the illness is, how it should be treated and who is in danger.

In the event of a biological threat or attack, follow these safety guidelines:

- Check local news websites, TV and radio stations for official news and information including signs and symptoms of the disease, areas in danger, if medications or vaccinations are being distributed and where you should seek medical attention if you become ill.
- Get away quickly if you become aware of an unusual or suspicious substance.
- Cover your mouth and nose with layers of fabric that can filter the air but still allow breathing (e.g., two to three layers of cotton, such as a T-shirt, handkerchief or towel).
- Depending on the situation, wear a face mask to reduce inhaling or spreading germs.
- If you have been exposed to a biological agent, remove and bag your clothes and personal items. Follow official instructions for disposal of contaminated items.
- Wash yourself with soap and water and put on clean clothes.
- Do not assume that you should go to the emergency department or that any illness is the result of a biological attack. However, contact authorities and immediately seek emergency medical attention if your symptoms match those described and you are in the group considered at risk.
- Expect to receive a medical evaluation and treatment and follow the instructions of doctors and other public health officials.
- You may be advised to stay away from others or even quarantined if the illness caused by the biological agent is believed to be contagious.
- Avoid crowds in the event of a declared biological emergency or developing epidemic.
- Follow the practices listed in the Infection Prevention and Control section of this booklet.
- Follow the instructions provided by emergency response personnel and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For more information visit www.ready.gov or www.emergency.cdc.gov.

CIVIL DISTURBANCE

- Consider installing an electronic security system.
 - Unless you are instructed to evacuate, the safest place to stay is in your home.
 - Do not go to observe the disturbance or unrest.
 - Close all window blinds and curtains.
 - Lock all doors and windows and secure your valuable and important records.
 - Stay away from doors and windows.
 - If you are confronted, remain calm and try to peacefully remove yourself from the situation.
 - Call 911 if there is a threat to life or safety.
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QUICK EMERGENCY REFERENCES

- Call Medcare Hospice immediately if you are relocated or are in danger: **(305) 465-2273**
- Bring with you: All medications, advanced directives, oxygen equipment, hygiene items, food and water for 7 days
- Evacuate if you live in a mobile home, require electricity-dependent medical equipment, or live alone with no caregiver
- Listen to local authorities: TV, radio, or websites for emergency updates
- Know your shelter options and register early if you qualify for special needs shelters
- Pets are not allowed in most shelters—have a separate plan and supplies for them