

Make a Medical Hurricane Preparedness Plan

Hurricane season is here and having a plan in place before a storm enters the Gulf of Mexico is key to ensuring your family is safe.

Many residents remember to stock up on batteries, bottled water and non-perishable food items in case of a power outage. But what do you do when power is necessary for storage of temperature controlled medications or the operation of medical equipment? Here are some helpful tips to help you plan for your family:

Do not open refrigerator or freezer doors at the immediate start of a power outage.

This is especially important if you have temperature-controlled medication. If power goes out for an extended time, medications that need to be refrigerated can be kept cold by placing them in an ice chest along with ice or frozen cold packs.

Obtain a 7-day supply of prescription drugs and essential medications.

Pharmacies and doctors' offices may remain closed even after a storm has passed due to damages or extended power outages.

Have an adequate supply of important non-prescription medications on hand.

Medications to consider are aspirin or no-aspirin pain relievers, antacid (for stomach upset), anti-diarrhea medication, laxatives, and activated charcoal (use if advised by the American Association of Poison Control Centers).

What else can you do to prepare for a hurricane?

If any of your family members require the use of medical equipment that is powered by electricity, make sure you have a way to power those devices in the event of an outage. Make a list of any family member dietary restrictions, essential medications, medical equipment required and instructions on how to use the equipment, and information about how to get in touch with your family's doctors. Make sure each member of your family has this list. This is helpful if you have to evacuate, go into a shelter, or get separated for any reason. Online resources to make this information more accessible are also available.