

Suggested Discussion For Wednesday Evening

Health Tip: Hurricane Preparedness

The threat of an approaching hurricane reminds us how important it is to have an emergency action plan in place. Take steps before severe weather hits to reduce the risk of serious injury. Gather emergency supplies, identify and reduce possible hazards in your home, and practice what to do during and after an emergency.

Familiarize yourself with the terms that are used to identify storms and hurricanes. Hurricanes are classified into five categories based on their wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential. Monitor local news outlets for the latest developments. If local authorities advise you to evacuate, leave immediately.

Preparing for a Hurricane

The Centers for Disease Control recommends the following basic steps to prepare for a hurricane:

- Learn about your community's emergency plans, alert systems, evacuation routes, and locations of emergency shelters.
- Identify potential home hazards and know how to secure or protect them before the hurricane strikes. Be prepared to turn off electrical power when there is standing water, fallen power lines, or before you evacuate. Turn off gas and water supplies before you evacuate.
- Locate and secure your important papers, such as insurance policies, wills, licenses, stocks, etc.
- Post emergency phone numbers at every phone.
- Inform local authorities about any special needs, i.e., elderly people, or anyone with a disability.
- Make plans to ensure your pets' safety.

Emergency Supplies Checklist

Stock your home with supplies that may be needed during the emergency period.

- Several clean containers for water, enough for a 3-5 day supply (about one gallon per person per day).
- A 3-5 day supply of non-perishable food that does not need to be cooked. Examples include: ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables; protein or fruit bars; dry cereal or granola; peanut butter; dried fruit; nuts; crackers; non-perishable pasteurized milk; comfort/stress foods. Bring a manual can opener. Disposable eating utensils, plates, cups, paper towels, etc. may be helpful.

- Baby food and/or prepared formula, diapers, and other baby supplies.
- A first aid kit and manual.
- prescription medicines and special medical needs, such as a change of contact lenses. Water-purifying supplies, such as chlorine or iodine tablets or unscented, ordinary household chlorine bleach.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlights (one per person), and extra batteries. **Do not use candles.** Have a wrench handy in the case you need to turn off gas or water supply.
- Sleeping bags or extra blankets. Change of clothes in a plastic bag to keep it clean and dry.
- Personal hygiene supplies, such as soap, hand sanitizer, toothpaste, sanitary napkins, toilet paper, etc. Baby wipes for the whole family to use in case bathing facilities are not available.
- Fill your car with a full tank of gas. In your car have food, flares, booster cables, maps, tools, a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, sleeping bags, etc.