

News & Information

Help for People with Diabetes Affected by Hurricanes

In the wake of recent hurricanes, people with diabetes face particular challenges to their health care. If you are an evacuee, it is of prime importance to identify yourself as a person with diabetes and any related conditions, so you can obtain appropriate care. It is also important to prevent dehydration by drinking enough fluids, which can be difficult when drinking water is in short supply. In addition, it is helpful to keep something containing sugar with you at all times, in case you develop hypoglycemia (low blood glucose). To prevent infections, which people with diabetes are more vulnerable to, pay careful attention to the health of your feet, and get medical treatment for any wounds.

On this page...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insulin, Drug, and Equipment Advice• Health Advice• Drug Resources for Evacuees with Diabetes• Health Coverage• General Hurricane Recovery Information

The CDC has compiled many [hurricane health and safety resources](#) in English, [Spanish](#), and several other languages.

Below are additional links which may be especially useful for people with diabetes.

For simple publications explaining the basics about diabetes, visit our [page of resources for health educators](#)

- [Insulin, Drug, and Equipment Advice](#)
- [Health Advice](#)
- [Drug Resources for Evacuees with Diabetes](#)
- [Health Coverage](#)
- [General Hurricane Recovery Information](#)

Insulin, Drug, and Equipment Advice

1. Insulin Storage and Potency

Switching Between Products in an Emergency

<http://www.fda.gov/cder/emergency/insulin.htm>

Patients should try to keep their insulin as cool as possible, avoiding direct heat and direct sunlight as well as freezing if placed on ice. Although a physician should supervise when switching insulin products, here are recommendations for emergency situations.

2. Safety of Drugs Exposed to Hurricane Conditions

<http://www.fda.gov/cder/emergency/default.htm>

Drug products should be discarded if they came in contact with flood or contaminated water. In the case of urgently needed life-saving drugs, if the container is contaminated but the contents appear unaffected (pills are dry), the pills may be used until a replacement can be obtained.

3. Blood Glucose Meters and Hurricane Disasters

<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/emergency/hurricane.html#bgm>

Heat and humidity can damage blood glucose meters and test strips. If you use a blood glucose meter, check the meter and test strip package insert for information on use during unusual heat and humidity.

4. Diabetes Disaster Preparedness

http://www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/documents/diabetes_disaster_guidelines.pdf

This brochure includes helpful disaster management tips about insulin, pens, and syringes; food safety; foot care; managing hot weather, erratic mealtimes, physical exertion, and sick days.

Health Advice

For simple publications explaining the basics about diabetes, visit our [page of resources for health educators](#)

1. Do You Have Diabetes?

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/pdf/diabetes.pdf>

En Español: ¿Tiene Diabetes?

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/espanol/pdf/diabetes.pdf>

A colorful, illustrated one-page handout reminding people with diabetes to take their medicine, check their feet for injuries, monitor their blood glucose, and try to eat healthy foods. In printer-friendly format.

2. Do You Have High Blood Pressure?

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/pdf/hypertension.pdf>

En Español: ¿Tiene la presión arterial alta?

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/espanol/pdf/hypertension.pdf>

A colorful, illustrated one-page handout reminding people with high blood pressure to take their medicine, eat healthy foods, get physical exercise, and get their blood pressure checked soon.

3. Hand Hygiene in Emergency Situations

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/handwashing.asp>

After an emergency, it can be difficult to find running water. However, it is still important to wash your hands to avoid illness or infection, especially when testing your blood glucose or treating a wound.

4. Keep Water Safe after a Natural Disaster

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater.asp#water>

Water may not be safe to drink, clean with, or bathe in after a hurricane or flood, which can be a particular problem for people with diabetes, who especially need to drink fluids and keep wounds clean.

5. Emergency Wound Care After a Natural Disaster

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/woundcare.asp>

People often receive wound injuries during and after a natural disaster, and wound care is of particular importance for people with diabetes.

6. Foot Care for People with Diabetes

<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/faq/concerns.htm#10>

Trench Foot or Immersion Foot

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/trenchfoot.asp>

Foot wounds or infections can develop into serious problems for people with diabetes, so foot care is especially important.

7. Cold and Flu Care for People with Diabetes

<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/faq/concerns.htm#17>

Cold and flu care is very important when you have diabetes, because being sick can raise your blood glucose, prevent you from eating properly, and make your immune system more vulnerable to serious illness.

8. Preparing for Emergencies: A Guide for People on Dialysis

<http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/10150.pdf>

This booklet suggests a 3-day emergency diet to follow if your dialysis must be delayed, directions for disinfecting water, and lists of supplies to keep on hand for further emergency situations.

9. Medical Consultation for Clinicians and Patients

<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/sep2005/od-14.htm>

At 1-866-887-2842 (toll-free) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, medical experts at NIH, academic medical centers and the nation's medical professional societies are available both to health care providers and to all patients affected by recent hurricanes to provide medical consultations on a wide array of medical problems.

Drug Resources for Evacuees with Diabetes

1. Rite Aid

http://www.riteaid.com/company_info/press/press_show.php/item_nbr/753/cat/national*

Rite Aid drugstores are open and operating in all of Louisiana except for the greater New Orleans area, all of Mississippi except the Gulf Shore area, and all of Alabama. Anyone with prescription needs can be helped at any open Rite Aid location. All open Rite Aid drugstores in the affected area are accepting American Red Cross vouchers.

2. Emergency Refills in Texas

<http://www.tsbp.state.tx.us/hurricanemain.htm>

The Texas State Board of Pharmacy has reported that it will relax rules to allow Texas pharmacists to provide up to a 30 day supply of medication in an emergency refill.

(flyer at <http://www.diabetes.org/uedocuments/Emergency.pdf>*)

3. AstraZeneca

<http://www.astrazeneca-us.com/modules/PRMS/display.asp?id=28132>*

Participants in the AstraZeneca Foundation Patient Assistance Program (PAP) can call 1-800-424-3727 to request a product refill or replacement, and change of address. Patients not enrolled in the AstraZeneca PAP are urged to visit a physician, pharmacist, local clinic/hospital or disaster relief agency to receive the AstraZeneca product that they have been prescribed.

4. Eli Lilly

<http://newsroom.lilly.com/ReleaseDetail.cfm?ReleaseID=171822>*

Eli Lilly and Company is donating insulin to those in need in the affected areas, and will assess the appropriateness of donations of other medicines as the specific needs become clearer. All of the company's product donations will be coordinated through Heart to Heart and the American Red Cross.

5. Merck

http://www.merck.com/about/feature_story/katrina.html*

Merck is providing, through U.S. retail pharmacies, up to a 30-day supply for patients who need replacement of their existing Merck medicines that were lost or damaged as a result of recent hurricanes. Patients requiring replacement medicines from retail pharmacies that are not yet back in operation will be encouraged to seek assistance from local or state agencies, where Merck is also providing medicines and vaccines. The need for a replacement prescription must be verified to the best of the pharmacist's or physician's knowledge, and the replacement prescription must be filled prior to Oct. 15 in order for patients to receive their medication.

6. Novo Nordisk

<http://press.novonordisk-us.com/internal.aspx?rid=310>*

Novo Nordisk has designated \$500,000 of its contributions to provide immediate care for people with diabetes. In addition, it is providing insulin products and advanced delivery devices, including prefilled insulin pens that can be used for a limited time without refrigeration. Since insulin should be stored in a cold place before it is given to people, Novo Nordisk has a system in place to provide clinics and shelters with refrigerators and generators. In addition to insulin, Novo Nordisk will provide its other therapies as the need arises.

7. Pfizer

http://www.pfizer.com/pfizer/are/news_releases/2005pr/mn_2005_0908.jsp*

Hurricane evacuees in need of medication can fill their prescriptions for Pfizer medicines at several participating pharmacy chains and independent community pharmacies across the country.

Health Coverage

1. Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/media/press/release.asp?Counter=1546>

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has acted to assure that the Medicare, Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Programs will accommodate the emergency health care needs of beneficiaries and medical providers in the Hurricane Katrina devastated states.

2. Social Security

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/emergency/>

The Social Security Administration is working to deliver monthly payments to beneficiaries affected by recent hurricanes, through temporary U.S. Postal Service delivery stations, Social Security offices, and through direct deposit.

General Hurricane Recovery Information

1. Information for Evacuees and Other Affected Persons

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/shelters.asp#evacuee>

Health and violence prevention fact sheets for evacuees, addressing parenting stress, mental health, sexual violence, youth violence, high blood pressure, head lice, hand hygiene, carbon monoxide, and wound care.

2. Hurricane Katrina—Special Messages for Schools

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/crisis/hurricane.htm>

Information for schools supporting evacuated students, addressing immunizations, mental health, meals, school supplies, and maintaining routines.

3. Hurricane Katrina Recovery Information from FirstGov.gov

http://www.firstgov.gov/Citizen/Topics/PublicSafety/Hurricane_Katrina_Recovery.shtml

This website contains pertinent information for Katrina evacuees.

En Español: Huracán Katrina y Rita

http://www.firstgov.gov/Espanol/Topics/Desastres/Huracan_Katrina.shtml

4. American Diabetes Association—Hurricane Katrina Information

<http://www.diabetes.org/hurricane-katrina.jsp>*

This diabetes-specific Web site includes information about local medical resources available in affected areas.

Documents on this page are available in Portable Document Format (PDF). Learn more about viewing and printing these documents with [Acrobat Reader](#).

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/news/docs/hurricanes.htm>