

HURRICANE PREP 101 FOR ONCOLOGY PATIENTS

While living in South Florida can be beautiful, there is a chance that a Hurricane can occur. The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1st to November 30th. Below are some tips that may help you prepare especially if you are undergoing treatment for a cancer diagnosis.

Safety First!

Know if your area is in an evacuation zone. If so, contact your physician or healthcare provider to advise them of your travel plans and or shelter you will be staying at. In this way, we can assure after the hurricane has past, we can connect with you.

If you will be evacuating to a shelter, gather needed supplies for at least three days. There are special needs shelters that you can register for that provide support for patient with impairments, disabilities and special medical needs. Register at: <https://snr.floridadisaster.org/Signin?ReturnUrl=%2f>

Make sure you have enough medication. If not, contact your physician or health care provider to refill necessary medications at least three days prior to the storm.

Assure you have support from a family or caregiver before, during, and after the storm and that they are aware of your plans.

If during the storm, you require emergency care, please contact 911. Keep in mind that emergency services may be halted depending on the severity of the storm.

If telephone services are available, you can contact Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at (305)243-1000 to be able to speak to a provider.

Stay Connected with us

The University of Miami has social media (Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook) channels and updates the local news stations on their status when it comes to delivering patient care. There is also a hotline that is provided to be able to receive updates via phone. Stay connected so you can receive updates after each advisory.

Important Items

Create a waterproof supply kit (place in a waterproof plastic bag) that includes important items like your medications, wound care supplies, a disposable thermometer, antiseptic medication, and other items you typically require for your routine medical care. Separate liquid items in a separate bag.

Make sure you have the following written information available: Your full name, cancer diagnosis, name of your physician, current treatment plan, and list of medications you are taking. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has a wallet card that you can download at: <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/coping/nci-asco-wallet-card.pdf>

If you are on a clinical trial (research study), make sure that you have a copy of your consent form so that any physician can look up the information on www.clinicaltrials.gov.



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Other resources

- If you evacuate to an area not near your medical facility, you can contact the National Cancer Institute to be able to assist you in finding a facility in which you can continue your care. Call 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

After the Hurricane

- Be aware of water advisories. It may not be safe to consume running water after a storm.
- Since cancer patients are at higher risk for infection, good handwashing is important in preventing infection. If you do not have safe water, utilize hand sanitizers.
- Throw away perishable foods that have been in the refrigerator temperature warmer than 40°F.

Stay calm!

Hurricanes are a stressful time for all, being prepared ahead of time helps you to conserve your energy. Have some word-searches, mindful coloring books, music, and reading books to minimize anxiety before, during, and after the storm.

References:

<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/emergency-preparedness-and-response/disaster-response-resources/spns-index.html>

<https://www.cancer.gov/contact/emergency-preparedness>

<https://www.cancer.net/blog/2017-08/after-hurricane-6-things-people-with-cancer-should-know>

