The physical and mental health toll of a hurricane can be long lasting, but you can learn effective and proven steps to prioritize your health.

1. Mind Your Medications. In the event of a hurricane or other disaster, getting to a pharmacy may be impossible, or if it’s even open. Work with your treating physician or virtual care provider to make sure your medications are accessible, if it’s even open. Work with your treating physician or virtual care provider to make sure your medications are accessible, if it’s even open. Work with your treating physician or virtual care provider to make sure your medications are accessible, if it’s even open. Work with your treating physician or virtual care provider to make sure your medications are accessible, if it’s even open. Work with your treating physician or virtual care provider to make sure your medications are accessible, if it’s even open.

2. Check Your First-Aid Kit. First-aid kits are rarely thought about until they’re needed. Make sure you have an ample supply of bandages, alcohol swabs and pain relievers, to manage everything from cuts and scrapes to headaches. Keep dust masks nearby in case you need to signal for help.

3. Download the Right Apps. If power is out, conserve your cell phone battery. Get information from trusted sources. Download the Red Cross app at: www.redcross.org/ get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps, to monitor more than 35 different emergency alerts that can help keep you and your loved ones safe. The FEMA app is also available, at www.fema.gov/mobile-app, for regular alerts from the National Weather Service. In case of evacuation or the need for care, seek out Red Cross shelters at www.redcross.org/ get-help/disaster-relief-and-recovery-services/

4. Be Smart About Stress. Hurricanes are stressful, even traumatic. Coping with the emotional effects of disasters is important for all ages. In the moment, try breathing exercises or tackling one item at a time on a to-do list and always consider talking to a psychologist or therapist. Telebehavioral health services such as BetterHelp (www.betterhelp.com) and Teladoc (Teladoc.com/therapy) are growing in popularity for successfully providing support on your terms, regardless of time of day or location.

5. Know Where to Access Care: A fever or infection is not going to wait for the storm to pass and may very well get worse if you wait. In many areas, doctors may also have evacuated or care will be worse if you wait. In many areas, doctors may also have evacuated or care will be worse if you wait. In many areas, doctors may also have evacuated or care will be worse if you wait. In many areas, doctors may also have evacuated or care will be worse if you wait. In many areas, doctors may also have evacuated or care will be worse if you wait. In many areas, doctors may also have evacuated or care will be worse if you wait.

Editor's Note: Although this information can be useful to anyone, it’s particularly important to people in: AL, FL, GA, HI, LA, MS, NC, SC, TX, VA.

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