

Patient Emergency Preparedness Plan

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, inclement weather or emergency, we have an emergency plan to continue necessary client services, we will make every effort to continue home care visits; however, the safety of our staff must be considered. When roads are too dangerous to travel, our staff will contact you by phone, if possible, to let you know that they are unable to make your visit that day. Every possible effort will be made to ensure that your medical needs are met.

All clients are assigned a priority level code that is updated as needed. The code assignment, determines agency response priority in case of a disaster or emergency. These codes are maintained in the agency office, along with information which may be helpful to Emergency Management Services in case of an area disaster or emergency. You will be contacted for medical attention:

Level I: Within 24 hours

Level II : Within 24 - 48 hours

Level III: Within 48 - 72 hours

In case of bad weather or other situations that might prevent our staff from reaching you, turn to your local radio or TV station(s) or check local news websites. Listen/watch for official information and follow the instructions provided by emergency response personnel. Based on what is known about the threat, you may be asked to take shelter, go to a specific location or evacuate the area. Please notify our office if you evacuate to another location or emergency shelter.

POWER OUTAGE

If you need help in a power outage and our phone lines are down Call 911 or go to the emergency room if you have an emergency, or call your closest relative or neighbor if it is not an emergency.

LIGHTNING

If you are inside: Avoid tubs, faucets and sinks because metal pipes conduct electricity. Stay away from windows. Avoid using phones with cords except for emergencies.

If you are outside: Avoid natural lightning rods such as tall trees in open areas. Get away from anything metal.

FLOOD

Be aware of flood hazards, especially if you live in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam. Flooding can take days to happen, but flash floods produce raging waters in minutes. Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. Avoid moving water if you must walk in a flooded area. Use a stick to test if the ground is firm enough to walk on. Be ready to evacuate if a flood watch is issued. Move important items upstairs. Fill a clean bathtub with water in case water becomes contaminated or is shut off. Turn off your utilities at the main valves if you are instructed to do so. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

TORNADO

As soon as a tornado is sighted, go to the lowest floor and find an interior room. Good shelters are basements, rooms and halls with no outside walls, bathtubs and spaces under the stairs. Many public buildings have designated shelter areas. Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. Get under a sturdy item, such as a table, and protect your head. Stay until the danger passes.

If the client is bedbound, move the bed as far from windows as you can. Use heavy blankets or pillows to protect the head and face. If you are in a vehicle, trailer or mobile home, get out immediately and go to a sturdy structure. If there is not one close by, lie flat in the nearest ditch and cover your head. Do not try to out-drive a tornado. They are erratic and move swiftly.

HOT WEATHER

There is a higher risk for heat-related illness in the summer. When it is hot outside:

- Never leave anyone sitting in a closed, parked car.
- Drink lots of water even if you are not thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Stay inside and out of the sun. Stay on the lowest floor, pull shades over the windows and use fans if you do not have air conditioning.
- Mist or sponge yourself frequently with cool water.
- Use sunscreen.
- Wear hats and clothes that are loose and lightweight. Clothes with light colors will deflect the sun's energy.
- Talk to your doctor about how sun and heat exposure will affect you if you take drugs such as diuretics or antihistamines.

Move to a cool place at the first sign of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headache, cramps). Rest and slowly drink a cool beverage. Seek medical attention immediately if you do not feel better.

WINTER STORM

Heavy snowfall and extreme cold can immobilize a region, resulting in isolation. Icy and/or blocked roads and downed power lines can happen any time it is cold or snowy. Wear layers of loose, lightweight, warm clothes, rather than one heavy layer. Wear hats and outer layers that are tightly woven and water repellent. Mittens will keep your hands warmer than gloves.

EMERGENCY KIT FOR THE HOME

Bad weather can be dangerous, so be prepared. Keep a kit, with these items In case you have a weather emergency:

- Battery-powered radio
- Lamps and flashlights
- Extra batteries
- Food that you don't have to cook
- Manual can opener
- Utensils, cups and plates
- Medications
- Extra blankets
- Water in clean milk or soda bottles
- Rock salt or sand for walkways
- Extra fuel
- Portable battery pack for cell phone

SHELTER SUPPLIES

The following is a list of what to bring to a shelter during an evacuation:

- Two-week supply of medications
- Medical supplies and oxygen
- Wheelchair, walker, cane, etc.
- Special dietary foods/can opener
- Air mattress/cot and bedding
- Lightweight folding chair
- Extra clothing, hygiene items, glasses
- Important papers
- Valid ID with current name and address
- Home health folder

Most shelters have electric power from a generator. If you evacuate to a shelter, bring your electrical devices (such as an oxygen concentrator).