

Hurricane Season is Coming!

Tips for ESRD Disaster Planning

- The first step in developing a disaster plan is to contact your County Emergency Management Department. For a list of Florida contacts by county, go to: http://www.floridadisaster.org/County_EM/county_list.htm.
- Ask the County Emergency Management Department for a list of shelters, and whether there are county shelters designated for ESRD patients. Make a list of shelters available to patients.
- Ask to join any disaster councils or other committees who deal with at-risk and disabled populations during a disaster.
- Develop a facility plan. If you already have a plan, review it annually.
- CMS has developed an excellent tool for Emergency Preparedness for Dialysis Facilities, on the web at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/esrd/9a.pdf>.
- Educate your patients at least annually regarding disaster preparation, preferably before hurricane season in Florida. Some key points to emphasize are:
 1. Stay home unless you are hurt.
 2. Start emergency diet that you should have received from your renal dietitian.
 3. Limit fruits and vegetables.
 4. Limit fluids to ½ normal current intake.
 5. Wait at home for instructions and details about available dialysis services. You may get instructions on TV or radio or by phone or messenger.
 6. If you must go to a shelter, alert the shelter manager of your dialysis needs.
 7. Inform your dialysis facility of your location.
 8. Most hospitals will not be equipped to provide chronic dialysis treatments.
- For an excellent guide for ESRD patients go to: <http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/10150.pdf> (available in Spanish and English).
- When there is advance notice of a disaster, such as with a hurricane warning, all patients should be dialyzed within 24 hours of the event and all personnel should be on alert. Emergency pre-evacuation dialysis may need to initiate in the middle of the night or on weekends depending on the storm track and speed. Patients should be advised that dialysis services might not be available for up to 3 days after the disaster.
- Have on hand a list of all dialysis clinics in the state, so that patients who do evacuate to another location have the information they need to find a clinic.
- Coordinate disaster transportation plans for your patients with local transportation providers, in the event that patients have to dialyze on a different schedule or at another facility due to the disaster.
- Develop an effective communication plan, as phones may not be operable. Inventory tools available, such as fax machines, two-way radios, mobile phones, ham radio, pagers, e-mail, web sites, toll-free numbers, Citizen Band radios, and runners.
- After the disastrous event, assess the dialysis facility for damage and operating potential. This status should be reported as soon as possible to Network 7 or the Emergency Operations Center through established procedure.
- Designate a back-up facility, in the event that there is a major loss of dialysis stations following a storm.
- Disaster drills are recommended, to ensure staff preparedness.
- For further assistance with your disaster plan, contact Network 7 at 813-383-1530.

REMINDER:



The Florida Hurricane season is here! Be sure to check with each patient and verify that you have their correct address, phone number and emergency contact information.