



If you have special medical needs,
now is the time
 to plan
 for hurricane season!

Oxygen dependency

Remember, oxygen compressors DO NOT WORK without electricity. Nor do CPAP and BIPAP machines and nebulizer machines for breathing treatments. There are manual alternatives, though: Establish a relationship with your medical supply company now and ask for the following items in preparation for storm season:

- Have additional portable oxygen tanks delivered to your home PRIOR to the storm. If you are on several liters of oxygen daily, make sure large enough tanks are supplied to last at least five to seven days without electricity. (Remember hospital systems are stressed, all doctors' offices / clinics are closed, and ambulances may be delayed during storm events.

- Make sure the tanks are delivered with the correct regulators for your prescribed oxygen level; if you are on 12 LPM of oxygen, a regulator supplied to provide a maximum of 6 LPM will not be adequate for you. Have the technician put the regulator on and explain how to turn it on and off so the tank does not leak, wasting your precious resource. Some tanks require an oxygen key that opens the tank for use; make sure you are left with one.

- Anyone who is dependent or may need breathing treatments such as Asthma or COPD patients must make sure disposable nebulizers are supplied that will attach to a portable oxygen tank with a regulator that will supply 6 Liters per minute of oxygen (any lower will not properly nebulize your medication).

- Talk to your primary care physician about prescribing additional bronchodilators such as Albuterol prior to the storm. (Remember, there are many respiratory irritants such as dirt particles in the air during and after high winds.)



Ventilator dependency

Ventilator Dependent: Establish a plan with your physician and local ambulance provider. This plan should consist of having your loved one transported by ambulance 24-48 hours before a storm makes landfall to a designated hospital or ventilator facility. These facilities have back-up generators ensuring ventilator care will not be interrupted.



Prescription Meds

Contact your primary care physicians and pharmacies to obtain additional medications well before a hurricane strikes. Many medications such as those for cardiac, respiratory, diabetic and hypertension must be taken daily to maintain and stabilize diagnosed conditions. In addition, some meds, including insulin, must be refrigerated. Have a cooler with ice at the ready BEFORE the power goes out. Make sure you have enough medication to last five to seven days.



Dialysis dependency

Dialysis is usually prescribed several times a week. Having a contingency plan IS CRITICAL for your survival. Most dialysis centers are closed during and after hurricanes due to power outages and lack of staff. Speak to your current dialysis center about their plan for transportation to other dialysis centers out of the storm area. Contact local non-medical and ambulance providers to set up transportation dates to these facilities if needed.



AMERICAN MEDICAL RESPONSE®

We Can Help!

Call us any time for advice and assistance on hurricane preparedness!

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