



Making preparations can spare a new mother from unneeded worry during power outages and storm recovery!

As we approach hurricane season, pregnant women and families with small children need to make extra preparations to ensure that things go smoothly, whether evacuating or staying.

What Mom's need to know:

- A pregnant woman in her last few weeks of pregnancy may need to have an alternate birth location in mind in the event of road problems or evacuation.
- A woman in the last four to six weeks of pregnancy should have phone numbers and locations for local obstetricians and midwives in the event they cannot reach their regular provider during evacuation.
- Having a copy of your prenatal care record with you during evacuation can ensure you get the appropriate level of care from another caregiver.
- Hurricanes do not directly cause labor to happen. Labor is expected anytime between 37 and 42 weeks and should be planned for.
- For families with infants and young children, the American Academy of Pediatrics advises parents who "children say that their parents don't talk to them about disasters, even though doing so you, as a parent or responsible adult, can help a child to feel and be safe."
- Often adults will have the local weather on the television or radio in the days leading up to a hurricane, and young children do understand the tone and urgency in reports, even though they may not understand the message.
- To help a child understand the situation, remain calm during preparation, and involve the child in any supply gathering. Make a separate box just for the child. Careful planning can make times of storms and power outages go a bit smoother, especially with children.

- Consider that you may be staying with friends, family or in a hotel or shelter and that you may be stuck in traffic at some point.

Feeding your baby:

- Your child's nutritional and comfort needs need to be considered first and foremost when creating a hurricane kit either at home or for a car ride out to safer ground.
- For babies less than 6 months old, breast milk is the sole source of recommended nutrition.

- Breastfeeding, always available and sterile, needs no special consideration during times of storms. Breastfeeding is already clean and ready to feed.

Make sure mother has enough clean water to drink for thirst. Stress of the storm will not destroy your milk supply, and will provide you and baby with a strong sense of comfort during a crisis.

- Pumping and feeding may prove to be challenging during a storm: you will need a battery operated quality pump or hand pump, clean storage bottles or bags, and a method of freezing or cold storage. Remember that pumped milk will last about eight days refrigerated; thawed, previously frozen milk will last about 24 hours in the fridge.
- If bottle-feeding formula, have a supply of pre-washed bottles and nipples in a clean plastic storage bag with proper formula measuring scoops. Pack at least three full days and nights' worth of clean bottles and formula in your pack for evacuation.



Additional bottled water should be on hand to mix the formula if using concentrate or powder and separate additional water to wash the bottles.

If financially feasible, collect ready-to-feed formula, as it requires no extra water to mix. Mixed, open formula needs to stay very cold to stay bacteria-free, so have a cooling method handy within 1 hour of preparation.

- For the baby older than 6 months and starting solid foods, have clean utensils and baby foods collected in advance.

Jarred foods should be unopened and in small quantity to avoid having to store leftovers. If baby is older than 6 months and eating family table foods, make a container filled with non-perishable favorites such as cereals, dried fruits, bars, crackers and shelf-life juice boxes or boxed milk such as soy milk, rice milk or shelf life cow milk for babies over a year.

- Keep in mind comfort items for your child such as favorite blankets, pajamas, dolls or music that can be played on a battery-operated tape player. Having familiar items during evacuations, relocations or scary storms can help the child feel secure.
- Holding your child or allowing children to sleep in the same room with the adults can also provide a sense of comfort as well as safety.



These items should be gathered and stored for staying or evacuating during a storm when dealing with the children - or soon-to-be children.

- If late in pregnancy, have a copy of your prenatal record and birth bags if evacuating
- Have phone numbers and locations for other obstetricians, midwives and birth locations in the event you cannot reach your regular provider.
- Make a separate supply bag or box just for the child.
- Three full days and nights worth of pre-washed bottles and formula in your evacuation pack (only if bottle-feeding).
- Additional sterile water should be on hand to mix the formula
- Separate additional heatable water to wash the bottles.
- One gallon per person per day for older children and adults (babies under 6 months do not need water).
- For older babies, have clean utensils and unopened baby foods (small jarred foods)
- If baby is on family table foods, make a container or bags filled with nonperishable favorites
- Comfort items for your child such as favorite blankets, pajamas, dolls, toys or music
- Small flashlight during power outages just for the child
- Extra baby wipes and diapers or portable potty, and a sealable plastic bag or box for soiled items
- Any medications or special supplements
- Insect repellent, hat and clean changes of comfy clothing.