

Be heart-smart to stay safe and healthy during and after severe weather

Edited By **TODD MARVER**
Enquirer-Democrat Reporter

Spring is the start of severe weather season in the Midwest U.S., and as you're making your emergency preparedness checklist, the American Heart Association cautions that it's also important to protect your heart and overall health in the wake of severe weather or other natural disasters.

Scientific research shows it's not only physical devastation that impacts the health and safety of people in the path of severe weather or other natural disasters:

In a small study presented at the American Heart Association's Epidemiology, Prevention, Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health 2021 Scientific Sessions, researchers found that among people who survived Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico in 2017, there were higher rates of high blood pressure, obesity and pre-diabetes, as well as increased incidences of heart disease and stroke two years after the storm compared to two years prior to the hurricane.

Twelve years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast in 2005, heart attack rates in affected areas increased by nearly five times, according to a study presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2019. Researchers noted that psychosocial, behavioral and traditional cardiovascular disease risk factors also increased significantly in the decade after the storm.

Authors of a study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association calculated that in the areas of New Jersey most impacted by Hurricane Sandy in 2012, there were 125 more heart attacks, 36 addition-

al strokes and 70 more deaths in the two weeks after the 2012 storm compared to the same time period from the previous five years.

It's not only severe weather that can have a negative impact on cardiovascular health. There has been much scientific research on health among people affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2012. A study published in the American Heart Association journal, Hypertension, found a significant increase in blood pressure levels and the incidence of high blood pressure among people who were forced to evacuate following that disaster.

Brittany Walsh, executive director of the American Heart Association, says there are several factors that may lead to increased cardiovascular disease and risk after severe weather or natural disasters.

"During and after a storm, many people experience extreme stress and trauma, which research shows can lead to an increase in cardiovascular disease risk. The impact can be more intense for heart disease and stroke patients," she said. "Additionally, in the aftermath of a significant natural disaster, property destruction and evacuations affect many basic support resources. This can make it challenging to see a health care professional for routine check-ups or to refill or adjust medications, especially for more vulnerable populations."

Walsh says it's important for people to be prepared and plan ahead. The American Heart Association's Community Emergency Resources page includes a wide range of helpful information.

In addition, here are some quick tips:

Take time now to write down any medical conditions, allergies and medications, including doses and the time you take medications, along with your pharmacy name, address and phone number using a medication tracker. Keep the information with any other "go-kit" items you have handy for quick evacuation.

If you do need to evacuate, even temporarily, bring your medications and your health information with you in a resealable plastic bag to help keep it dry.

If your medication is lost, damaged or was left behind when you evacuated, research open pharmacies and seek a refill as quickly as possible.

Some states allow pharmacists to make medically necessary exceptions on certain types of prescription refills during an emergency.

Use the American Diabetes Association's Patient Preparedness Plan if you have diabetes and use insulin. There you'll find a checklist of supplies and guidelines on how to prepare for an emergency.

Another way to prepare for a possible medical emergency is to learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED) until help arrives. If performed correctly, CPR can double or triple a person's chance of survival. You could be saving the life of someone you love. A simple, one-minute video shows you what you need to know to perform Hands Only CPR.

As always, the American Heart Association remains a resource for information and guidance. Visit heart.org for the latest on heart and stroke health.

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SUDOKU

	1	5						6
						2		
		2			5	3		9
	5							
		9		2			7	
		4		1		8		
8			3		4	6		
	4				9	1		
	6			5				

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

7	4	9	1	5	8	3	9	2
8	3	1	6	9	2	7	4	5
5	2	6	4	7	3	1	6	8
3	6	8	6	1	5	4	2	7
1	7	5	8	2	4	6	3	9
2	9	4	3	6	7	8	5	1
6	1	3	5	8	9	2	7	4
4	5	2	7	3	1	6	8	6
6	8	7	2	4	9	5	1	3

SPORTS TIME WORD SEARCH

C O A C H H B V H D P N B H E E L F O N
N B M G Y Q I Q E P O E M I T R E V O Y
L O V S H P G F A I T O P G H U P L A L
P E P T T F E U T D D O D L A G I V Q M
E S A V E N S I Q A G G L M A G H L S H
O N H G S D T C E T E D F I L G S Q I I
P P D E U E T T O P G D O F F E N S E R
D A T U P E V N T R Y M N A L S O Y E M
V F T M R R R O E O E R C R H T I M T Y
S N O N T A S N F N U B Y V G I P U A L
H C U D G L N A U D O R O B D L M Q M T
A V N U L F R C I R E P N A A M A I M R
L Q O I H P U E E Q H M P A R C H O A O
F G R N L Y T F U B S T O O M D C N E P
T D O V O E E I F G F V S N C E U M T H
I T S F L R P V I C T O R Y I G N V G Y
M A R H E M F I T N E S S B F S P T O O
E U T E E A V G N I N I A R T U R I C A
B A I N R S T A D I U M V L E N L Q T T
R C T Y H I R O S T E R D A V I A C E C

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ATHLETE	FITNESS	ROSTER
CHAMPIONSHIP	HALFTIME	SCOREBOARD
COACH	LEAGUE	STADIUM
COMPETITION	MVP	TEAMMATE
DEFENSE	OFFENSE	TOURNAMENT
DRILLS	OPPONENT	TRAINING
ENDURANCE	OVERTIME	TROPHY
EQUIPMENT	REFEREE	VICTORY

C E C V A I A V A D R E I S O R I H A T I C R
T L T N E T A L A D I U M I N R A S I A U E
A C I R E T A R T I N I N I N G A V A E L U E
O O P S P F S B F S S I N E S S I T N E S S I
A G A N G I C N S A R A I C I C P L F L S T I
H P W N G I C N S A R A I C I C P L F L S T I
T E U N C E U F S V S F L F U B S T O O M D C
O O H C H O H A O H O H O H O H O H O H O
R I W I W A V A N A V A N A V A N A V A N A
L W I W T D B A V O P O N U N T G O N C H
T A W I T H R C I R E P N A A M A I M R S
Y A W I T H R C I R E P N A A M A I M R S
E R M A S T V A N W A I N A V A N A V A N
R I O S F E N S E R T O P G D O F F E N S E R
I I D S G T I F I D E T E T E T E T E T E T
H S T H G V W T G G V A V I D O P A U P
W S T H G V W T G G V A V I D O P A U P
L V L V L V L V L V L V L V L V L V L V L V
T W I T H R C I R E P N A A M A I M R S
A O A V I T H R C I R E P N A A M A I M R S
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