

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

Hurricane/Flood Information Sheet: Guidelines for Pregnant Women

Flood situations can be very stressful. The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County cares about you and your baby. Please follow the guidelines below to help you and your baby to be healthy and safe.

Before A Flood:

- Be sure to have an enough food and water to last at least three days.
- Know where to go for safe shelter.
- Notify your family members to let them know where you will be...
- If you need to leave the area to be safe, take a copy of your medical records, and a two-week supply of any medications you are taking, including prenatal vitamins.

After A Flood:

There will be a period of cleanup and recovery. This is the time when you must be very careful not to become dehydrated and/or over-tired. Heavy work and dehydration can contribute to premature labor.

To prevent dehydration and exhaustion follow these suggestions:

- Drink plenty of water or beverages that do not contain alcohol or caffeine.
- Bathe off when you can. Try to stay in the shade as much as possible. If you have to be outside in the heat, bring water and a hat or umbrella to provide shade if they are available.
- Do not lift heavy objects.
- Be sure you do not over tire yourself, take frequent rests.
- Try to eat a healthy diet as soon as possible. Sometimes stress causes you to eat too much, not enough, or choose "comfort" foods that are less healthy; try to limit these choices.

To decrease stress:

- Try to lie down on your left side three times a day, even if only for 10-15 minutes.
- Take deep breaths from your belly. You should see your stomach rise with each breath.
- Find a buddy to discuss your fears and concerns.
- If you ever feel like harming yourself or your baby, talk to a health care provider immediately.

Preterm or Early Labor starts more than three weeks before your baby is due. Preterm labor can happen to anyone, but the risk is greater for women who are:

- Dehydrated
- Under stress
- Have had a previous premature birth
- Overweight or underweight
- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol

- Taking drugs that have not been prescribed by your doctor

Please remember a contraction doesn't have to hurt or be painful. It is normal to have some contractions when you first lie down, have a full bladder, after you walk up or down stairs or engage in sex. It is not normal to have regular, frequent contractions before your baby is due.

You should call your health care provider or a hospital right away if you experience any of the following signs of preterm labor:

- Contractions, when your tummy tightens like a fist every 10 minutes or more often;
- A change in vaginal discharge such as leaking fluid or any bleeding;
- Pelvic pressure, or a feeling like your baby is pushing down;
- Low dull backache or cramps that feel like your period might be starting,
- Diarrhea with contractions

If you wait too long to get medical attention, your baby could be born too early. When you speak to a health care provider, be sure to ask when to call back if your symptoms do not go away.

Remember it is important to continue your prenatal care.

- If your health care provider's office is closed, or if you have had to move due to a storm, you can call a local hospital, county health department, or Healthy Start Coalition to get information about prenatal care and the location of hospitals.
- **For more information, contact the Family Health Line at 1-800-451-2229.** Representatives are available Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m., and on Saturday and Sunday between 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. *This is not an emergency call line.*
- For further information, please visit the Sarasota Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) website at <https://www.scgov.net/SarasotaCOAD/Pages/YFST.aspx> and go to the bottom of the page to download hurricane tips for Pregnant women and Breastfeeding moms.

Websites for additional information:

- www.FloridaDisaster.org.
- <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/>

To sign up for the CodeRed Emergency Notification System that is available to property owners and occupants in Sarasota County, please call the Sarasota County Call Center, 941-861-5000 or visit www.scgov.net. To follow the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) alerts on Twitter, go to <http://twitter.com/scgoveoc>.