



HEALTH CONCERNS AFTER A FLOOD

Mental Health Information for Patients, Caregivers and Providers

Disasters affect more than just buildings or landscapes. They can seriously impact each of us in different ways. If you are feeling depressed, anxious, stressed, angry or sad, free confidential help is available.

What challenges should we expect after a flood?

- ✓ New injuries and illness
- ✓ Exacerbations in chronic illnesses or conditions
- ✓ Lost/destroyed prescriptions and/or medical devices/equipment
- ✓ Disrupted access to medical care, mental health care and substance use treatment services
- ✓ Disruption in access to water, food, clothing, shoes, furniture, housing and transportation (including loss of personal cars and bicycles)
- ✓ Disruption or loss of school/education and work for financial support
- ✓ Disruption and loss of community support services

Identify and support individuals at highest risk for anxiety, PTSD, depression, substance use and neglect:

- Individuals with existing mental health conditions and drug/alcohol dependence
- Individuals who are socially or physically isolated without a support network.
- Individuals or households experiencing loss of a job or other financial support.
- Individuals and households struggling to meet their basic needs, such as clean water, food, formula, clothing, shoes, sheets/blankets, towels, furniture, shelter/housing, transportation.
- Consider **individuals who may need extra support/outreach**, including individuals experiencing mobility or limited transportation, pregnancy, caregiving (for infants, young children, and other dependents), cognitive impairment, impaired vision/hearing, limited English proficiency (read, write and speak), geographic isolation and/or living alone, and those uncertain about using services due to immigration/documentation status.

What are the warning signs that someone may need mental health support?

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself.
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Acting anxious or agitated, behaving recklessly. Displaying extreme mood swings.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.

FREE Mental Health Support and Resources

- **CalHOPE Warmline (855-845-7415) and Online Chat Mental Health Support Service**
<https://www.calhope.org/> The warmline is open for calls 24/7. CalHOPE Connect (online chat) is staffed with Support Specialists Monday – Friday 8AM-Midnight. Your preferred language will be recognized once you begin a chat with one of the trained CalHOPE Connect Support Specialists.
- **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.** If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is also available through the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Call or text 988 or go to: <https://988lifeline.org/>
- **Children & Youth Mental Health Resources,** California Health & Human Services:
<https://www.chhs.ca.gov/childrens-mental-health-resources/>
- **Youth Crisis Line.** A 24/7 statewide emergency response system for youth (ages 12-24) and families in crisis. Call or text 800-843-5200
- **Teen Line.** Feeling unwell? Lonely? Scared? No issue is too big or too small. When you call (800-852-8336) or text ([TEXT TEEN to 839863](https://www.teenline.com/)), another teen will be there to listen and help. Hours: 6-10pm, 7 days per week.
- **LGBT Youth TalkLine** (Call 800-246-7743) A safe space where you can open up and talk about coming out, bullying, isolation, identity, family issues and much more. Anonymous and confidential. Hours: Monday through Friday 1pm – 9pm, and Saturday 9am – 2pm.
- **Trans Lifeline** (Call 877-565-8860) A peer support phone service run by trans people for our trans and questioning peers. Call us if you need someone trans to talk to, even if you're not in crisis.
- **(Foster Care) Family Urgent Response System (FURS)** Call (1-833-939-3877), text (FURS), online chat (<https://www.cal-furs.org/>), and in-person support 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, for children and youth (up to age 21) who have spent time in foster care and for their caregivers. No issue is too big or too small.
- **211 Hotline & Website:** Access critical health and human services by calling the free and confidential 211 hotline that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and provides services in all languages. Services, assistance, and resources can be searched online at: [California 2-1-1 Get Connected. Get Answers. \(211ca.org\)](https://www.211ca.org/)
- **Crisis Counseling or Psychologic First Aid.** FEMA provides information for outreach workers at: <https://www.fema.gov/blog/crisis-counseling-psychological-first-aid>

Outreach recommendations: Coordinate door-to-door outreach with food delivery/service organizations, public health, and healthcare delivery services to be able to address many needs. Partner with needle exchange programs, substance use services and mental health providers to reach those at highest risk of mental health complications. Ask about the need for acute mental health services, daily medications, medical devices/equipment, substance use/addiction services (including needle exchange), basic supplies and the need for personal protective equipment while they interact with individuals/household affected by floods.