

# Looking after your health after an extreme weather event

## Getting help

- If it is an emergency, or if someone has trouble breathing, call 111.
- If you need urgent health advice please contact your usual family doctor, Healthline, or a local urgent care clinic.
- Healthline is available 24/7 on 0800 611 116. It is free and they can answer questions about medication and other health concerns.
- Visit [www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz) to find which nearby local urgent care clinics, pharmacies, general practices and other services are open.

## Getting medication

- Community pharmacies can give you three days' emergency supply of medication (unless it is a controlled drug). There is a cost to this and you would need to go to the pharmacy.
- Some pharmacies also offer a medication delivery service. Call the pharmacy directly to check.
- Talk to your usual family doctor if you or a family member may need more than three days' supply. If you are struggling to get an appointment you can also call Healthline for advice on 0800 611 116.

## Emotional wellbeing & mental health

- It is understandable to feel sad, distressed, worried, confused, anxious or angry, even if you've not been impacted personally by the flooding.
- Remember it's ok to not feel ok.
- If you need to talk to someone 24/7 counselling is available for free by calling/texting 1737.

## *Coping with stress*

You may be feeling tense or on edge, having trouble sleeping, muscle tension, and worrying about things. These are common symptoms of stress, and are normal during times like these.

These symptoms almost always pass with time. It can help to keep up usual routines, share your thoughts and feelings with whānau, and to exercise. Other things that help can include:

- Supporting one another, especially in the family and in your community.
- Providing emotional support and comforting each other.
- Tackling the jobs that need to be done a bit at a time and counting each success.
- Looking after your own and your family's general health – rest, exercise, food and company all help (being careful not to drink too much alcohol).

### *When to ask for extra help*

Sometimes stress following a flooding can be ongoing, and may impact your physical and mental health and wellbeing.

It's time to ask for help if:

- Your sleep is badly affected.
- You feel very distressed, irritable, on edge or agitated much of the time.
- You feel hopeless, despairing, miserable or that you can't go on.
- You have trouble concentrating, are distracted and can't do your usual tasks.
- You feel your health isn't so good.
- You have recurrent nightmares or intrusive thoughts about the emergency.
- You have new symptoms or old problems that may have returned (such as problems with your breathing, heart or stomach).

You may need to seek support for your child if they show withdrawal, aggressive behaviours, difficulties at school, or problems separating from parents or going to sleep.

### **Getting support**

If you need to speak to someone, or are worried about your child, get support from one of the following:

- Your usual family doctor/GP.
- Free 24/7 counselling is available by calling/texting 1737.
- Free online therapy for stress/anxiety is available at [justathought.co.nz](http://justathought.co.nz)
- Vaka Tautua provide mental health support for Pasifika Peoples, and can be contacted on 0800 825 282.

### **Family harm**

There are a range of services available that offer free and confidential family harm support.

Call 0508-744-633 anytime, from any number in New Zealand.



**For more information**  
Visit: [health.govt.nz/floods](http://health.govt.nz/floods)