

Accessing health services in natural disasters

During floods, earthquakes, fires, volcanic activity or other emergencies

Emergency – dial 111. If someone is seriously ill, injured or in immediate danger, **call 111**.

For urgent health advice contact your usual family doctor, pharmacist, Hauora or Pacific provider, if they are open and you can call.

Not an emergency? Call Healthline on 0800 611 116 (24 hours, 7 days) for free health advice from health professionals. This advice includes where and when to go for assessment and treatment if that is what you need. Healthline has interpreters and Māori clinicians available 8am–8pm.

Seeing a doctor

Call your GP or healthcare provider to make an appointment. An urgent appointment may be available if you explain what's wrong.

Not enrolled or can't see your regular provider?

Visit a local urgent care centre. You do not need an appointment, but you might have to wait.

Find an urgent care centre at healthpoint.co.nz/gps-accident-urgent-medical-care/

Non-urgent care, online consultations are available 24/7, with subsidies for some people. Visit healthnz.govt.nz/online-phone-healthcare/online-gp-care

Healthline on 0800 611 116 can provide advice on your medication, or if you're away from your home, you can't access your doctor or you are not enrolled. Healthline advice is available for New Zealand citizens, residents and overseas visitors.

If power or internet outages prevent online booking, Healthline can help arrange appointments by phone.

Online consultation subsidies are available for:

- Children under 14 years
- Young people 14 to 17 years
- Community Services Card (CSC) holders.

Deaf, disabled people and their whānau can call the Disability Helpline 0800 11 12 13, text 8988 or use the NZ Relay service nzrelay.co.nz available 24/7.

Prescription Medication

If you evacuate, take your medication with you. Ask your pharmacist if your medication is okay to use if it is no longer kept chilled.

If you finish your medication or can't access it, contact your doctor to get a new prescription. If you cannot see a doctor, contact a pharmacy for advice. Pharmacists may provide up to a three-day emergency supply, although this may be expensive as there is not government funding for this.

Find a pharmacy at healthpoint.co.nz/pharmacy/

If the power goes out

Storing medication safely

- Keep refrigerated medication in a chilly bin or insulation bag with ice packs.
- Don't let the medication touch the ice or gel packs. Freezing can ruin some medicines, like insulin.
- If power is out for more than 3 days, contact your pharmacy or family doctor for advice about whether your medicines are safe to use or provide emergency supplies.

Powered Medical Equipment

If you have medical equipment that needs power to run, you should be registered with your electrical retailer as medically dependent on electricity. Your equipment provider does this. If you are not sure if you are registered, check with your equipment provider.

You should have a backup plan for power outages, such as:

- a generator,
- staying with a friend or relative
- an alternative power source.

During a power cut you should contact your power company if you don't have a plan and need power for medical equipment, medications or life support.

If this does not work, contact your equipment provider. If it is a life-threatening emergency **call 111**.

Wellbeing

See healthnz.govt.nz/managing-stress-in-an-emergency

Feeling stressed or anxious during an emergency is normal. Talking to people and helping others can be very useful.

Free mental health support, call or text Need to Talk? on 1737 anytime to speak to a trained counsellor.

More support

- Local free face-to-face mental wellbeing support at wellbeingsupport.health.nz
- Sleep advice during challenging times at healthify.nz/hauora-wellbeing/s/sleep-tips
- Helping children cope at kidshealth.org.nz/coping-natural-disaster
- Mental wellbeing resources at getready.govt.nz/mental-wellbeing/