

Medications

If you take medicine or use medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week. You should keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as dosage or treatment information. If it is not possible to have a week-long supply of medicines and supplies, keep as much as possible on hand and talk to your pharmacist or health care provider about what else you should prepare. Discard medicines exposed to flood waters and have all prescriptions refilled as soon as possible.

Cleaning Clothing and Bedding

Since disease-producing bacteria often carried by floodwaters can remain alive in and on fabrics for long periods, care in laundering clothing and bedding is essential.

First, brush off all dirt and if mud stained, rinse in cold water until as much mud as possible is removed.

Wash solution for laundering clothes, bedding, etc., should include a disinfectant. Laundry bleach or other commercially available products may be used. Follow directions on containers. **Flooded items that cannot be cleaned and dried within 24-48 hours should be discarded.**

Mattresses/furniture soaked with floodwater should be discarded; reconditioning is too difficult to be done at home. Contact the landfill for proper disposal. 758-5910

Quick Dos and Don'ts After the Flood

- During cleanup, wear gloves and regularly wash hands in clean water (boiled, if from the tap) with soap.
- Do not allow children to play in flood water! It can have high levels of bacteria and cause illness. Throw away any toys that have touched flood water.
- Do not flush your toilet if flood waters are still covering your septic tank.
- Once the flood waters have been drained from your home, do not try to remove any mold yourself. Call your local health department and ask for a professional in your area to do it.
- You can make a cleaning disinfectant from one cup of bleach combined with five gallons of clean, boiled water. Clean any walls, floors or furniture that have had contact with flood waters.
- Steam clean rugs and replace filters in ventilation systems.
- Flooded items that cannot be cleaned and dried within 24-48 hours should be discarded.
- Protect yourself against mosquitoes that show up during and after floods and may carry viruses: Wear long-sleeved clothing and limit being outdoors during dusk and dawn. Use DEET containing repellents per label directions. Dump out standing water. Contact Bruce at FCCHD 751-8130 concerning standing water and mosquitoes.

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Quick Guide for Health and Hygiene in the event of a Flood



1035 1st Ave West
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-751-8101
www.flatheadhealth.org
or on Facebook

Drinking Water

All water possibly contaminated by flooding must be disinfected, whether from wells, springs, or cisterns. Bottled water which has not been in contact with flood water may be used for drinking, hand washing, and cooking/ware utensils. Water should be treated by one of the 2 methods given below (Note: if the water is excessively turbid (cloudy or colored), it may be difficult to sanitize.)

1. Boil water for five minutes and store in a clean container. The flat taste can be eliminated by shaking the water in a bottle or pouring it from one container to another.
2. Mix 5 drops of household bleach with 1 quart of water (or 20 drops per gallon) and let stand for at least five minutes (preferably 30 minutes to an hour) or longer before drinking. Bleach should be unscented and free of detergents or additives. This water will be suitable for drinking, hand washing, and for washing pots and utensils.
3. An insulated beverage container with a bottom spigot is useful for storing a small supply of drinking and culinary water.

Wells

For more detailed information regarding disinfecting wells please see Water Disinfection brochure or go to our website at www.flatheadhealth.org

Personal Hygiene

Several simple rules of personal cleanliness should be followed **using bottled, boiled or disinfected water.**

1. **Wash hands** with soap and water after using the toilet or participating in flood clean-up and handling food-contaminated articles.
2. Use bottled, boiled or disinfected water for brushing teeth and other personal hygiene.
3. Children are especially at risk of diarrheal disease, wash your hands thoroughly after diaper changing, and before handling or playing with small children.
4. Be sure hand washing is done before eating, using bottled or disinfected water.
5. **Do not allow children to play in flood water!** It can have high levels of bacteria and cause illness. Throw away any toys that have touched flood water.

Personal Protective Equipment

Wear protective clothing covering limbs, feet and hands while cleaning up debris and rubber gloves while scrubbing flood-damaged interiors and furniture.



FEMA News Photo

Immunizations

Tetanus diphtheria (Td) booster is recommended at least every ten years. A person who gets a severe burn or cut might need a booster dose of Td or Tdap. Call your health care provider or Flathead City-County Health Department for more information

If hepatitis or other immunizations are indicated the information will be provided to the radio, television, health department website and newspapers by the County Health Officer. The local public health nurse can also answer questions.

Use Clean Water for Everything



Stored Foods

To prevent diarrheal diseases and other illnesses, **the following items should be destroyed if they have been exposed to flood water:** fresh meats, poultry, fresh vegetables, fruit; ready-to-eat foods such as lunch meat, cheese, home canned foods; medicines and cosmetics; and packages that are not hermetically sealed (airtight), including flour, packaged frozen foods and other commodities in bags.