



The Emotional Toll of Hurricane Season: How to Take Care of Your Mental Health

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2 min read

Living in Florida brings sunshine, beaches — and hurricanes.

For many residents, hurricane season is more than just a weather event. It can trigger **anxiety, stress, insomnia**, and even symptoms of **past trauma**. While physical preparedness is crucial, **emotional preparedness** often gets overlooked.

Here's how you can take care of your emotional health during hurricane season in Florida.

Why Hurricane Season Triggers Anxiety

Hurricane-related anxiety is completely valid and common, especially if you've:

- Lived through a major storm (like Irma or Andrew)
- Experienced loss or displacement
- Have children, elderly parents, or pets to care for
- Suffer from generalized anxiety or PTSD

The uncertainty — *Will this storm hit? Should I evacuate?* — can cause a sense of helplessness and lack of control.

Mental Health Symptoms to Watch For

During hurricane season, you may experience:

- **Irritability or anger**
- **Trouble sleeping or concentrating**
- **Increased worry or racing thoughts**
- **Fatigue or burnout**
- **Panic attacks or physical symptoms** like headaches, stomach issues, or chest tightness

If these symptoms persist or worsen, it may be time to speak with a licensed therapist.

6 Ways to Care for Your Mental Health During Hurricane Season

1. Create a Mental Health Emergency Plan

Along with water and batteries, pack coping tools:

- Medications
- A journal or calming playlist
- A weighted blanket or stress ball
- List of emergency contacts, including your therapist

2. Limit Media Exposure

Constant news and storm tracking can heighten anxiety.

Check reliable sources (like the National Hurricane Center) **once or twice a day** — not every hour.

3. Practice Grounding Techniques

Use simple tools like:

- 5-4-3-2-1 grounding exercise
- Deep belly breathing
- Guided meditations (try Insight Timer or Calm app)

4. Stay Connected

Don't isolate. Call friends or family members. Talk about your fears. If you're in therapy, keep your appointments or move them to telehealth if needed.

5. Focus on What You Can Control

- Prepare your home and evacuation plan early.
- Pack in advance.
- Charge phones and backup batteries.
- Doing something productive can reduce helplessness.

6. Consider Counseling

Therapy can help you process fear, manage stress, and develop coping strategies tailored to your situation.

At Miami Lakes Counseling, we provide a safe space to talk about your fears — and develop emotional tools that last well beyond the storm.

 **You Are Not Alone**

Hurricane season is part of life in Florida, but the **emotional toll doesn't have to overwhelm you**. If anxiety, stress, or past trauma are making it hard to function, support is available.

You deserve peace of mind — even in stormy weather.