

Storm-related stress? Five self-help tips

August 30 2012, by Joseph Halm

(Medical Xpress)—With Isaac coming ashore this morning (Aug. 29)—seven years from the date of Hurricane Katrina's landfall—New Orleanians are facing some unique stresses, along with the familiar ones. Jane Parker, Tulane School of Social Work professor, shares some of her tips for handling any storm in a healthy manner.

- Choose your source. "Pay attention to the information from credible weather sources and public officials only," says Parker, who also is director of the Institute for Psychosocial Health in social work. False or dramatic news coverage or storytelling produces added stress for no reason.
- Don't make the storm a 24-hour news marathon. Staying informed is one thing, but if you catch yourself sitting and worrying in front of the TV, clean up the house. Do something to take your mind off the storm.
- They're always watching. [Parents](#) need to remember that children are always looking to their parents for cues. If they see their parents getting overly stressed, children may do so as well. "Parents need to remember that their children's reaction will be largely based on their own," Parker says.
- Take care of your body. One thing that often gets lost in a potential disaster situation is a person's physical well-being. It is extremely important to stay hydrated, schedule normal meals and get as much rest as possible because a healthy and cared-for body will lead to a solid state of mind.

- This too will pass. "Think to yourself, 'What did I learn from prior disasters that I can put in place to lower my own stress during this event?'" Parker says. This [storm](#) will blow through, and people "find a lot of [resilience](#) in knowing that they're prepared and have dealt with these situations before."

Provided by Tulane University

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