



Water-Related Disasters: Key Clinical Points

Climate Change & Healthcare:

- Climate change → increasing temperatures, sea level rise, intense storms → extreme flooding
- Climate change & extreme weather events interact with healthcare/surgical systems
 - Surgical care contributes to climate change: energy-intensive
 - Climate pressures impact healthcare systems and surgical care delivery: challenges for the severity and volume of surgical needs, resources, and supply chains
 - Strong healthcare/surgical systems and climate resilience: promote disaster risk reduction

Health Impacts of Flooding Disasters:

Direct:

- Surgical: trauma, burns, soft tissue infections
- Non-surgical: drowning, cardiac, water-/vector-/rodent-borne infections, mental health impacts

Indirect:

- Healthcare infrastructure, food and income security, displacement

History & Management:

- Anticipate possible flooding-related health effects based on timeline and exposures.
- Obtain a history and physical exam in a critical situation that includes assessment of risks for waterborne infections
 - Think typical organisms (Gram positives) but also atypicals (*Vibrio vulnificus* and *aeromonas* etc.)
- Anticipate specific surgical needs after flooding events
 - Specifically for necrotizing soft tissue infections- high clinical suspicion
 - If NSTIs suspected, emergent surgical management

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