



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

DRUG CONTROL DIVISION

April 16, 2020

Guidance Maintaining an Adequate Supply of Chronic Prescription Medication During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been closely monitoring the medical supply chain in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic, understanding that it may be impacted, potentially leading to supply disruptions or shortages.

The Department of Consumer Protection's (DCP) Drug Control Division has been monitoring FDA actions, and cares deeply about the significant impact that this pandemic may have on patient care. The FDA and DCP are doing everything within their authority to help prevent and alleviate shortages. We continue to work with manufacturers, pharmacies, and direct care facilities to reduce and prevent shortages as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

[Any shortages, including any related to COVID-19 will be posted on FDA Drug Shortages webpage.](#)

We understand that patients and prescribers alike have concerns about access to necessary medication, especially to treat chronic conditions.

In addition to on-going government work, patients are encouraged to take certain steps to manage their medication supply without "hoarding" to ensure that they maintain an adequate supply, especially if they have been diagnosed with chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, HIV/AIDS, or heart disease.

In order to preserve access to medication, we recommend patients:

- Ask their physicians or pharmacists about their ability to access a 90-day prescription, if their insurance allows it (and ask about financial supports if not);
- Double check their prescription to make sure they have refills available;
- Keep track of their medication quantities, and the remaining supply;
- Store their medication carefully to prevent loss or theft;
- Set reminders on their phones or calendars to keep track of refill times; and,
- Order their refills prior to running out of their prescription supply.

Before heading to the pharmacy, or making an order, patients may:

- Confirm that their insurance plan has waived restrictions, if any, regarding supply limits;
- Communicate with their pharmacy about the availability of their medication;
- Research options their pharmacy may have to manage refill prescriptions online;
- Ask about what options your pharmacy has for automatic refills; and,

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- Ask the pharmacy about home delivery and mailing options if they are unable to travel to the pharmacy.

If there is a supply shortage, patients should:

- Ask their practitioner if there is an alternative medication that can be prescribed; and
- Ask their practitioner if medication samples are available.

No matter what:

- ***Do not*** stop taking your medication or taking less medication to “make it last longer”.
- ***Do not*** make any changes with your medication without the prior approval of your practitioner.

If you have relatives and loved ones with chronic conditions, check in with them to make sure they have an adequate supply of medication.

We encourage families and patients to do their best to anticipate medication needs so they don't run out, especially if they are quarantined or are unable to be in public.

Please, don't panic or try to get as much medication as you can. If you purchase more medication than you need, that means the next person who tries to go access their medication may not be able to. If you have concerns, make sure you contact your physician or pharmacist for advice.

