

# WHAT IF...

# NO MEDICINE

Most patients think they are prepared for an emergency, but few actually are.

## Emergency Checklist

1. Know what your medications do and how each one benefits you.
2. Keep an up-to-date list that includes each prescribed medication's name, dosage and instructions.
3. Have a safe and dry place to store your medications. A pill organizer may help keep track of doses.
4. Keep your medications with you when you travel. Keep them in a safe place so you can grab them easily in case of a disaster.
5. Take your medications as prescribed. Changes are not recommended in a disaster, unless directed by your doctor.
6. Contact your pharmacy to make sure you have enough medication on hand at all times in case of disaster.
7. Use [rxopen.org](https://rxopen.org) to find open pharmacies near areas impacted by disaster.



Quality  
Insights

Renal Network 5

#### References

1. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Drug Shortages. [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/drug-shortages). <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/drug-shortages>. Published 2020. Accessed June 25, 2020.
2. West R. Generic Drugs. [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov/media/79217/download). <https://www.fda.gov/media/79217/download>. Accessed June 25, 2020.
3. Lee B. Prescription Quantity Limits and Refills Too Soon: What to Do When Insurance Coverage Is Restricted. [Goodrx.com](https://www.goodrx.com/blog/prescription-quantity-limits-insurance-plans-limit-coverage/). <https://www.goodrx.com/blog/prescription-quantity-limits-insurance-plans-limit-coverage/>. Published 2020. Accessed June 25, 2020.

This material was prepared by Quality Insights Renal Network 5 under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The contents do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. Publication No. ESRD5-073120c

## THE FACTS

- Drug shortages can happen for many reasons. Some reasons may include:
  - Manufacturing and quality problems
  - Delays
  - Discontinuations
- Manufacturers give shortage information to the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Together, they work to prevent or reduce the impact of shortages.<sup>1</sup>
- In the United States, 2.6 billion prescriptions – about 70% of all prescriptions – are filled using generic versions of brand-name products. In shortages, patients may be offered a generic substitution. For most patients, this is acceptable and reduces cost. Although this is routine, sometimes there are problems switching to generic medications.<sup>2</sup>
- Pharmacists can refill a prescription under a special law, known as Kevin's law. This authorizes an emergency fill of certain chronic medications if a doctor cannot be reached for authorization. Each state's law may vary on:
  - Medications allowed
  - How much of the medication can be dispensed
  - How often you can get a refill
  - If the medication will be covered by insurance.<sup>3</sup>

