

# Use Lessons Learned from Past Drug Shortages When Dealing With New Ones

We're still finding **better ways to reduce the impact of drug shortages on patient care.**

Try to stay ahead of the game when it comes to drug shortages.

Be familiar with med usage in your work area...from cabinets, floor stock, satellite stock, etc. And check in regularly with your purchaser...to get a heads-up about potential shortages.

Alert your pharmacist or admin right away if a potential shortage matches up with a high-use med in your work area. Include suggestions for handling the shortage...and any lessons learned from past shortages.

For example, offer to pull the med from places where it's not frequently used...and route it to areas where it's needed most.

Continue to help implement and follow contingency plans for shortages. For instance, draw up individual doses from vials...instead of dispensing whole vials...to avoid waste, when necessary.

Keep in mind, the risk of mishaps goes up when alternative products must be stocked...due to different appearance, sizes, strengths, etc.

Use labels and shelf tags to alert colleagues about alternative products. And ask your admin to alert other departments to avoid errors.

Learn more about error prevention during shortages...and get links to the most current shortage info...with our updated technician tutorial, *Dealing With Drug Shortages*.

## Key References:

Am J Health Syst Pharm 2016;73:864. [www.fda.gov/Drugs/NewsEvents/ucm432474.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/NewsEvents/ucm432474.htm) (7-27-16).  
[www.ashp.org/menu/DrugShortages/CurrentShortages/Bulletin.aspx?id=813](http://www.ashp.org/menu/DrugShortages/CurrentShortages/Bulletin.aspx?id=813) (7-27-16).

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