

Assist Your Patients During a Disaster

Recent wildfires, hurricanes, and earthquakes have put the spotlight on how you can **help your patients weather natural disasters**.

Follow your state laws, pharmacy policies, and common sense.

Encourage patients to try to have an adequate supply of meds...to avoid scrambling to get their meds filled if a disaster hits.

Help patients update med lists. Suggest using our patient handout, *My Medication List*...or downloading phone apps or taking pictures of Rx labels...in case patients are displaced and need to use another pharmacy.

Be aware that, if an emergency is declared in your state, you'll usually be allowed to fill an emergency Rx...typically for a 7- to 30-days' supply...if the patient's prescriber or pharmacy can't be reached.

Many states also allow you to emergency fill Schedule III, IV, and V Rx's during a state of emergency...but not C-Its. Use your professional judgment and your state's PDMP when emergency filling controlled meds.

If patients don't have their Rx labels or med lists, try contacting their regular pharmacy, prescriber's office, or insurance company.

For early-refill insurance rejects, use the override code "13"...this designates an override is needed due to a disaster.

Be ready with alternatives if you can't get certain meds due to supply issues. For example, consider an IR instead of ER product...or a different med in the same class. Use our comparison charts for help.

For more practical tips, get our CE, *Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Response*...and our cheat sheet, *Dealing With Disasters*.

Key References:

-MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2017;66(37):995-8

-www.ncdpd.org/Resources/Emergency-Preparedness

Pharmacist's Letter. Nov 2017, No. 331104

Cite this document as follows: Article, Assist Your Patients During a Disaster, Pharmacist's Letter, November 2017

The content of this article is provided for educational and informational purposes only, and is not a substitute for the advice, opinion or diagnosis of a trained medical professional. If your organization is interested in an enterprise subscription, email sales@trchealthcare.com.

© 2025 Therapeutic Research Center (TRC). TRC and Pharmacist's Letter and the associated logo(s) are trademarks of Therapeutic Research Center. All Rights Reserved.