

BE Prepared: Medications & Prescriptions

In the United States, most people who have an insurance plan have fairly ready access to prescription medications. Most pharmacies do not stock every medication being manufactured, therefore, the delivery timeframe could be 1-2 days. In our society a “just in time “ delivery system has developed. That means delivery of prescription medications runs pretty close to delivery as needed. According to Pamida Pharmacist, Jim Jensen, in the case of a pandemic, there may be an interruption or reduction in that delivery system due to a decrease in workforce. Many businesses and people will be impacted by this decrease in workforce. Pharmacies will only be able to fill prescriptions at the rate they are being re-supplied from their distribution center.

The answer, we need to have at least a month’s supply of the prescriptions we take every day in our First Aid kits. These medicines include insulin, heart medicine, asthma inhalers, and much more. However, prescriptions expire. So you will need to periodically rotate these medicines with newer refills. You will also need to ask your doctor or pharmacist about storing prescription medications such as heart and high blood pressure medication, insulin and other prescription drugs.

Most health plans monitor their user’s refills. This assures that people are not using more medication than is necessary or healthy. Health Plans currently do not have a provision to allow for extra refills for pandemic situations. These medications will most likely need to be paid for “out of pocket”.

For more information on keeping your family safe and healthy, call Aitkin County Health & Human Services at 927-7200 or 800-328-3744 or visit redcross.org or Ready.gov.