

## Fact Sheet

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## Medical Countermeasures, Strategic National Stockpile, Shelf-Life Extension Program

### What are medical countermeasures?

- Medical countermeasures include medical interventions used to control disease outbreaks and epidemics.
- It includes medications (including vaccines, antiviral drugs or antibiotics) needed to treat, protect or provide post-exposure protection.
- These are usually distributed to specific populations based on public health guidelines and recommendations.
- Medical countermeasures is broken into two parts, distribution and dispensing.
  - Distribution refers to moving medications and medical supplies to where they need to be during a public health emergency. It includes requesting, warehousing and transportation.
  - Dispensing refers to providing medications or vaccine to individuals in the affected population.
  - Dispensing often occurs by establishing and operating a point of dispensing (POD).
- **Additional medical countermeasures resources:**
  - OHA:  
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREPAREDNESS/PARTNERS/Pages/medicalcountermeasures.aspx>
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/readiness/toolsandresources.htm>
  - US Food and Drug Administration:  
<https://www.fda.gov/EmergencyPreparedness/Counterterrorism/MedicalCountermeasures/AboutMCMi/ucm431268.htm>

### What is the Strategic National Stockpile?

- The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services operates the SNS.
- It is the nation's largest supply of potentially life-saving pharmaceuticals and medical supplies for use in a public health emergency severe enough to cause local supplies to run out.

- MCM from SNS would be requested by the state Public Health Division through the Governor’s Office.
- **Additional SNS resources:**
  - US Department of Health and Human Services: <https://www.phe.gov/about/sns/Pages/default.aspx>
  - Association of State and Territorial Health Officials: <https://www.fda.gov/EmergencyPreparedness/Counterterrorism/MedicalCountermeasures/AboutMCMi/ucm431268.htm>

**What is the shelf life extension program, why should I know about it?**

- The SNS may use the federal Shelf Life Extension Program to help maintain its supply.
- The program allows extensions to the expiration date on medications after testing for safety and efficacy.
- Product that passes testing is relabeled with a new expiration date and passed on to agencies receiving SNS. Labels can be in writing, print or graphic formats, and may be on the packaging or come separately.
- The Shelf Life Extension Program isn’t something most people know about. When people don’t understand the process behind the relabeling, it can cause confusion and misinformation. It can slow a life-saving response.
- We want people to learn about the SNS to help ensure people understand that in a real event, there is a process to ensure medication is safe and effective before changing the expiration date.
- We also want people to know that medications with extended dates may not have date changes labeled in a way that looks familiar when SNS is being used to control a public health emergency.
- Additional shelf life extension program resource: <https://www.fda.gov/EmergencyPreparedness/Counterterrorism/MedicalCountermeasures/MCMLegalRegulatoryandPolicyFramework/ucm411446.htm>

