

# Nitroglycerin shortage has medical community worried

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(HealthDay)—An ongoing shortage of the drug nitroglycerin is causing problems and concerns for doctors and hospitals in the United States. The drug is often the first therapy used by emergency room doctors when treating a heart attack patient.

"It's one of those drugs that in certain circumstances, there really is no substitute for," Frederick Blum, M.D., an emergency doctor who treats patients at Ruby Memorial Hospital in West Virginia, told *The New York Times*. He added that nitroglycerin supplies are so low that "if we had one or two patients that were really sick that needed extended drips, it could exhaust our supply pretty quickly."

Hospitals and doctors became concerned they might run out of the drug when Baxter International, the only U.S. manufacturer of injectable nitroglycerin, recently said it was slashing shipments of the drug, *The*

*Times reported.*

This week, Baxter and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said they were taking action to ease the shortage of nitroglycerin.

**More information:** [Health Highlights: March 26, 2014](#)

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