

Sen. Schumer outlines steps to combat 'dire' drug shortage

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Warning of a coming "panic" over decreasing drug supplies, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer on Sunday outlined steps to strengthen the supply chain.

The U.S. has shortages of about 300 drugs for everything from cancer to

asthma, he said, citing the Food and Drug Administration—and the situation is poised to get worse.

"There's a dire drug shortage hitting New York and the nation right now," Schumer said at a Midtown Manhattan press conference. "Our [doctors](#) and our patients are near panic because of the loss of these pills."

He cited a range of reasons for the situation, like lack of chemical ingredients for some manufacturers and a weak system to warn of coming shortages.

"It's unimaginable that in a place like the United States, a person with [cancer](#) may be told, 'This drug might save your life, but we can't get a hold of it. There's a shortage,'" said the New York Democrat.

The shortage of drugs like cisplatin, which is used to treat a wide range of cancers, recently prompted the FDA to allow imports from China.

Schumer said the FDA needs to go further, by "maximizing" drug imports, boosting domestic manufacturing and sharing between regions.

"If one hospital or region has a surplus, let's get that reported and then get those drugs to the places where it's needed," he said.

Drug shortages increased 30% from 2021 to 2022, and the declines are getting worse, according to Schumer.

Schumer outlined several legislative steps: Congress should strengthen the government's ability to predict shortages and boost incentives for domestic drug manufacturing, among other measures, he said.

"If we can do these things, then the [drug shortages](#) will be a thing of the past," Schumer said.

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