

The impact of a major drug shortage in Canada:

Valsartan an angiotensin receptor blocker (ARB) drug used to treat hypertension and heart failure

On July 9, 2018, Health Canada announced a broad recall of valsartan, causing a major drug shortage

Within 3 months of the drug recall:

58% ↓ Decrease in valsartan

2% ↓ Decrease in all ARBs

15% ↑ Increase in other ARBs



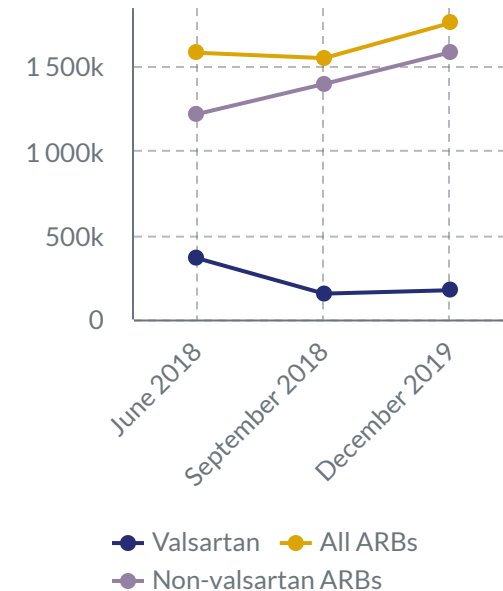
Within 18 months of the drug recall:

1 in 2 ▲▲

Continued with an alternate medication after switching from valsartan

1 in 7 ▲▲▲▲▲▲▲

Valsartan prescriptions did not switch to an alternate medication



The estimated number of **patients** affected

160,000



Drug shortages like these cause pressure on:



Patients, clinicians and the health care system to find alternative therapies, and



The **supply chain** leading to further shortages of other ARBs

For more information:

Fenna, J., Chu, C., Hassan, R., Gomes, T., & Tadrous, M. (2021). Extent of a valsartan drug shortage and its effect on antihypertensive drug use in the Canadian population: a national cross-sectional study. *CMAJ Open*.