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October 29, 2026

Kyle Diamantas, J.D.
Acting Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20993

Dear Acting Commissioner Diamantas,

I write to express my deep concern regarding persistent disruptions in the supply of estradiol transdermal patches. Prescriptions for these patches have risen by 162% over the last two years, in part due to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) decision to remove the antiquated black box warning label on hormone therapy treatments for women.[1] I am pleased that more women are seeking the essential care they need, but it is critical that supply meets this rising demand. The FDA must take meaningful action to address this shortage and ensure steady access to this medicine.

Millions of women rely on estradiol patches to treat menopause symptoms – including hot flashes, sleep disturbances, and mood changes – and to preserve their long-term health.[2] Unfortunately, patients across the country, including many of my constituents, have struggled to fill their prescriptions. One national survey found that 44% of women face extreme difficulties or are unable to access their medication.[3] Disruptions in this essential medicine can lead to the sudden and debilitating return of menopause symptoms, and only sporadic access can accelerate bone loss, deteriorate blood vessels, and weaken the skin in the long term.[4]

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[1] Angelica Peebles, *Estrogen patches are hard to find, and it may not be resolved any time soon*, Consumer News and Business Channel, June 26, 2026. https://www.cnbc.com/2026/06/26/estrogen-patches-are-in-short-supply-as-women-seek-menopause-support.html
[2] Id.
[3] Haley Jena, *Why Is There an Estrogen Patch Shortage? What the Data Shows—and How to Find Care Now*, Midi, September 4, 2026. https://www.joinmidi.com/post/estrogen-patch-shortage-data
[4] Marjike Durning, *Starting and Stopping Hormone Replacement Therapy*, Healthgrades, September 8, 2026. https://resources.healthgrades.com/right-care/hormone-replacement-therapy/starting-and-stopping-hormone-replacement-therapy.

While I acknowledge the FDA's efforts to work with manufacturers to increase supply, they have not been effective enough at addressing the gap. In January 2026, the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) reported a shortage of 10 estradiol patch formulations. The problem has worsened in the nine months since: The number of formulations of which there is a shortage is now 17.[5] ASHP collects its data directly from providers, pharmacists, and patients, who have all reported that these patches are not readily available.

I urge the FDA to include estradiol transdermal patches in the Drug Shortage Database. Doing so would equip regulators and healthcare providers with the tools needed to address this disruption, such as being able to identify alternative manufacturers or extend the expiration date of the current inventory.[6] Additionally, it would ensure that manufacturers and the FDA are coordinating to expedite the review of new manufacturing lines to increase patch production.[7]

I acknowledge that the recent influx in demand has exacerbated this shortage, creating an urgent challenge for your agency. Nevertheless, almost a year without tangible results is unacceptable for my constituents – and for women across the country – who rely on these treatments. Removing the black box label was an important step forward to prioritizing women's health, but consistent patient access is crucial for individuals to experience the full benefits of estradiol transdermal patches. The FDA has a responsibility to ensure these vital treatments are readily available for all Americans.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress

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[5] American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Estradiol Transdermal System, August 12, 2026. https://www.ashp.org/drug-shortages/current-shortages/drug-shortage-detail.aspx?id=1206&loginreturnUrl=SSOCheckOnly

[6] 21 U.S.C. § 356(f).

[7] 21 U.S.C. § 356(c).