

Generic drugs **save you money**



Generic drugs: The unadvertised brand

Generic drugs are made with the same active ingredients and produce the same effects in the body as their brand-name equivalents. A generic drug differs from a brand drug only in name — and price.

Who makes generics?

Drugs are originally marketed by their brand name, which is protected by patent for up to 20 years. Until the patent expires, no other companies can produce the generic equivalent, keeping the cost to the consumer higher. When the drug patent expires, the drug can be released by other companies. The only difference may be the color or shape of the drug and the price. Brand-name firms are linked to an estimated 50 percent of generic drug production.

The cost of advertising

Drug companies spend billions targeting consumers. Their ads for prescription drugs can increase your awareness of treatment options, which is good. But they may also create an artificial demand for a drug, which means you often spend more money on their advertised prescription drug. It's one reason why generics can save you as much as 90 percent over the cost of brand-name medications.

Generics are endorsed

The American Medical Association, the largest organization of medical doctors, endorses generic drugs as acceptable for the American public. Most hospitals routinely use generic drugs for patient treatment. The Food and Drug Administration approves generics as safe and effective and enforces generic drug standards.

To learn more about generic drugs and see how much money you can save by switching to a generic, visit theunadvertisedbrand.com.

If you have BCN drug coverage

One way we work to keep costs down while maintaining high-quality care is to promote the use of generic drugs. Since the major difference between brand-name and generic drugs is price, your prescription will automatically be filled with the generic equivalent when medically appropriate.

Questions?

Call Customer Service, using the number on the back of your ID card, between 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.



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