HOW A MEDICINE BECOMES GENERIC

Before a generic is prescribed to you, it has been prescribed as a brand-name medicine.

Pharmaceutical companies make huge investments in research and development to bring their new, brand-name products to market. Typically their product will have a 20-year patent so that they can recoup these costs plus those needed to market and advertise the new medicine. This means that other pharmaceutical companies may not sell a generic version of the medicine during this time.

Once the patent expires, other companies may begin to produce and sell a generic version of the medicine. These companies will have much lower development costs. This means they can make the medicine at a lower cost and sell it to you for less.

PUT GENERICS TO WORK FOR YOU

Generic medicine is your opportunity to take more control of your health care costs and start saving!

START SAVING CHECKLIST

☐ Ask your doctor to prescribe generics and allow your pharmacist to substitute a generic when possible.

☐ Say “yes” if your pharmacist asks whether you would like a generic of the brand-name medicine your doctor prescribed.

☐ Ask your doctor if there is a generic alternative available to treat your condition if there is no generic equivalent for a brand-name medicine you are prescribed.

☐ Get an approval from your doctor before you switch to another drug company’s brand (generic or brand-name).

☐ Keep note of any changes you may feel after switching from a brand-name to a generic and tell your doctor.

Your privacy is important to us. Our employees are trained regarding the appropriate way to handle your private health information.
A SMART CHOICE

GENERICS. The name sounds pretty plain, but generics are really quite special—the number 1 reason being their lower cost.

THINK ABOUT IT. In an environment of rising health care costs that seem out of your control, generics actually offer a path to reduce spending.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

US Food and Drug Administration (FDA):
“Generic drugs…are just as safe and just as effective as their brand-name counterparts, and they are a cost effective way of achieving substantial savings.”

The American Medical Association (AMA):
“One of the primary ways physicians can practice cost-effective prescribing is by offering patients a generic medicine when one is available.”

CVS Caremark is your team of experts. We help you to fill, refill, understand and manage your prescriptions and their costs— as well as your health.

FACTS ABOUT GENERICS

» Millions of Americans Use Generics to Treat Medical Conditions. Nearly 8 in 10 Prescriptions filled in the U.S. are for Generic Drugs¹

» Consumers using Generics saved about $158 billion on prescriptions in 2010¹

» Average Cost of a Generic Drug is 80 – 85% Less than the Cost of Its Brand-Name Counterpart¹

» For almost 30 years, America’s generic pharmaceutical industry has been providing FDA approved generic versions of brand medicines at a savings to consumers of 30% to as much as 80%.²

HIGH QUALITY PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE AT A LOW PRICE

When it comes to medicine generic does not mean low quality. Generic medicine is the FDA-approved identical, or bioequivalent, of a brand-name drug. This means it is the same as the brand-name.

GENERIC AND BRAND-NAME MEDICINES

SAME
» Active ingredient(s)
» Strength
» Dosage form (pill, liquid, cream, etc.)
» Administration (oral, topical, under tongue, injection, etc.)
» Similar chemical or drug formulation
» Acts on the body with the same strength and absorption process
» Indications, dosing and labeling
» Efficacy and safety profile
» Follow strict FDA Good Manufacturing Practices rules

DIFFERENT
» Price
» Inactive ingredients that could effect shape, color or taste


²Generic Pharmaceutical Association, GPHAonline.org.

Visit the CVS Caremark generics website for information and a complete list of generic medicines available to treat common conditions.

www.caremark.com/generics