Generics

We want you to get the most from your medicine – and your money. That's why we cover money-saving generic, or non-brand, drugs. By choosing a generic, you get the same effect as a brand drug, but normally at a lower cost.

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Health. **Join In.**

What is a generic drug?

Generics are copies of brand-name drugs. Brand and generic drugs have the same active ingredients, strength and dose. And the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires generic drugs to meet the same high standards for purity, quality, safety and strength.

Generics may look different. But they work just as well.

Even though the active ingredients of a generic drug are identical to the brand version, manufacturers may use different inactive ingredients. This could change the color, shape and size. But because generics must meet the same standards as brand drugs, you can be sure the generic is just as safe and works just as well.

Why do generics cost less?

It's expensive to create a new drug. There's the cost of research, development and marketing. When a company creates a new drug, it's given a patent for up to 20 years. During that time, only the company that created the drug can sell it. This gives the company a chance to recover the initial costs and develop new, better drugs. But it also means the company decides the price of the drug without any competitors.

Once the patent expires on a brand drug, other companies can make a generic version. Because the first drug company already paid to develop the drug, these companies can avoid the same high costs. And, many companies can make the same generic drug. That means there's more competition to keep the price down.

Is a generic right for me?

Ask your doctor if a generic is available for a drug you take – and see if it's right for you. Don't switch or stop taking any drugs before you talk to your doctor.

Top Brand Drugs and Their Generic Equivalents

Here are some examples of common brand and generic drugs. As you'll see, the cost savings can really add up. If you want to check a drug that isn't on this list, call Customer Care at the phone number on your member ID card.

Brand Name	Cost*	Generic Equivalent	Cost*	Savings
Ambien	$154.39	Zolpidem	$16.02	**$138.37**
Casodex	$704.44	Bicalutamide	$226.23	**$478.21**
Coreg	$160.94	Carvedilol	$19.04	**$141.90**
Flomax	$165.13	Tamsulosin	$59.93	**$105.20**
Fosamax	$102.28	Alendronate	$15.74	**$86.54**
Glucophage	$120.11	Metformin	$16.28	**$103.83**
Imitrex	$294.75	Sumatriptan	$76.93	**$217.82**
Keppra	$484.01	Levetiracetam	$82.57	**$401.44**
Lamictal	$419.59	Lamotrigine	$26.03	**$393.56**
Norvasc	$85.06	Amlodipine	$19.23	**$65.83**
Pravachol	$188.55	Pravastatin	$16.77	**$171.78**

Brand Name	Cost*	Generic Equivalent	Cost*	Savings
Prilosec	$334.33	Omeprazole	$28.14	**$306.19**
Prozac	$344.86	Fluoxetine	$21.03	**$323.83**
Requip	$186.14	Ropinirole	$43.97	**$142.17**
Risperdal	$344.45	Risperdone	$51.70	**$292.75**
Topamax	$426.19	Topiramate	$33.36	**$392.83**
Trileptal	$342.69	Oxcarbazepine	$85.87	**$256.82**
Ultram	$163.05	Tramadol	$25.43	**$137.62**
Xanax	$114.07	Alprazolam	$16.57	**$97.50**
Zestril	$63.57	Lisinopril	$9.92	**$53.65**
Zocor	$183.41	Simvastatin	$19.73	**$163.68**
Zoloft	$141.80	Sertraline	$24.21	**$117.59**

** Based on WellPoint claims data. Actual claims cost may be different.*

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