

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT GENERIC MEDICATIONS



Helpful information

What is a generic medication?

Generic medications have the same strength and active ingredients as their brand name counterparts. They are sold under the chemical or scientific name of the medication instead of the manufacturer's patented brand name. Brand name medications have patents that last for twenty years, protecting the rights of the owner and sole manufacturer. Once the patent expires, other manufacturers are free to make the medication in a generic form.

What are the differences between brand name medications and their generic alternatives?

Generic medications may differ from their brand name counterparts in shape, packaging, color, flavor, preservatives, expiration time and, sometimes, labeling. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that all medications, both brand name and generic, meet the same requirements for quality, strength, purity and potency. The FDA only approves generic medications that have the same active ingredients and work the same way in the body as their brand name counterparts.

Common Brand Name Medications with Generic Equivalents

BRAND NAME	GENERIC NAME	COMMON USE
Cozaar/Hyzaar	losartan/losartan-hctz	High blood pressure
Diovan/Diovan HCT	valsartan/valsartan-hctz	
Toprol XL	metoprolol ER	
Lipitor	atorvastatin	High cholesterol
Zocor	simvastatin	
Fosamax	alendronate	Osteoporosis
Lexapro	escitalopram	Depression
Zoloft	sertraline	
Prilosec	omeprazole	Heartburn/Ulcer (Acid reflux)
Protonix	pantoprazole	

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Do generics take longer to work?

No. When a manufacturer wants to make a generic medication, they must prove to the FDA that the medication works the same way in the body and within the same amount of time as the brand name medication.

Are generics as safe as brand name medications?

Yes. The manufacturer of the generic medication must prove to the FDA that the generic medication is as safe as its brand name counterpart.

Why should I choose a generic medication?

Generic medications usually cost 80-85% less than their brand name counterparts. So, generic medications may save you money.

How do I choose a generic medication?

You should talk with your doctor to see if a generic medication will work for you. Also, you can use the Prescription Medication Price Quote tool on **myCigna.com** to find out what medications cost under your pharmacy plan, and compare prices between Cigna Home Delivery PharmacySM and retail pharmacies.



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