

CIGNA HealthCare Generic Medications



- Q** What is a generic drug? **A** A generic drug is a drug product that has the same active ingredients, strength and dosage form as the brand-name counterpart. It is sold under the chemical or scientific name for the drug instead of the manufacturer's brand name. Brand-name drugs have a twenty-year patent life. Once that patent expires, other manufacturers are free to make the drug in a generic form.
- Q** Are there differences between a brand-name drug and its generic alternative? **A** Yes. Generic drugs may differ from their brand-name counterparts in such things as shape, packaging, fillers (including colors, flavors, preservatives), expiration time and, within certain limits, labeling. However, the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that *all* drugs, both brand-name and generic drugs marketed in the United States, meet the same requirements for quality, strength, purity and potency. The FDA will only approve generic drugs that have the same active ingredients and works the same in the body as the brand-name counterparts.
- Q** Are generics available for all brand-name drugs? **A** No. Only after a brand-name drug loses its patent can other manufacturers produce the generic form. Keep in mind that even after a patent expires, some drugs may not be available in a generic form, if no manufacturer makes them. Today, about half of all brand-name drugs have generic counterparts.
- Q** Do generic drugs take longer to work? **A** No. When a manufacturer wants to produce a drug generically, that manufacturer must provide evidence to the FDA that it works in the body just like the brand-name drug and within the same amount of time as the brand-name drug.
- Q** Are generic drugs as safe as the brand-name drugs? **A** Yes. The manufacturer of the generic drug must prove to the FDA that the generic drug is as safe as the brand-name drug.
- Q** Are generic drugs made in the same type of facilities as the brand-name drug? **A** Yes. Generic manufacturers must meet the same exact standards as brand-name manufacturers. The FDA makes over 3,500 inspections a year to ensure that these standards are met in both brand-name and generic manufacturing facilities. Many times the same brand-name facilities make their own generic drugs. In fact, nearly 50 percent of generic drugs are made in brand-name facilities.
- Q** Why should I use a generic drug? **A** Generic drugs represent real value. Generic drugs usually cost from 30 to 75 percent less than their brand-name counterparts *and*, since the FDA is very strict about approving generics, you can be assured that the generic drug you receive is a safe and effective alternative to the brand-name drug.
- Q** How do I get a generic drug? **A** Start with your doctor or pharmacist. Questions you should ask include:
- Is there a generic version of my drug available?
 - Are generics right for me?
 - Are there any risks I should know about before I change to a generic?
 - How much will I save if I change to a generic?

Some examples of common brand-name drugs and their generic equivalents:

BRAND NAME	GENERIC NAME	USED FOR TREATING
Ativan®	lorazepam	Anxiety
Darvocet-N-100®	propoxyphene/apap	Pain
Mevacor®	lovastatin	High Cholesterol
Pepcid®	famotidine	Excess Stomach Acid
Prinivil®/Zestril®	lisinopril	High Blood Pressure
Prozac®	fluoxetine	Depression
Ritalin®	methylphenidate	ADD/ADHD
Tenormin®	atenolol	High Blood Pressure

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