



7 out of 10 prescriptions filled in the U.S. are for generics.

Every year, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves many generic drugs that treat a wide range of conditions. These medications have the same active ingredients and work the same way in your body as their brand-name equivalents.

The cost of a generic drug is **80 to 85%** lower than the brand-name product.

To develop and sell new medications, brand-name drug manufacturers spend a lot of money on research, development, promotion and advertising. Generics do not have these costs and so higher prices are not passed along to the consumer.



You can save with generics.

Find out for yourself. Use the space below to compare copays to determine your savings.

BRAND DRUG		CURRENT MEDICATIONS		GENERIC EQUIVALENT		SAVINGS
Drug Name	Cost for 30-day supply	Drug name	Cost for 30-day supply			
Zocor	\$40	Simvastatin	\$10			\$30*

Pay for the medication, not the name

ask for a generic



Generic drugs are safe, effective and they cost less than their brand-name counterparts. When you need prescription medication, ask your doctor or pharmacist, "Is there a generic that is right for me?"



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Just the same, without the name

What is a generic drug?

When patents or other periods of exclusivity on new drugs expire, manufacturers can seek approval from the FDA to manufacture and sell chemically equivalent generics. The generic drugs are required to work like their brand-name versions in dosage, strength, performance and use. They also must meet the same quality and safety standards.

What's the difference between generic and brand drugs?

You won't find many differences, except for name and price. The manufacturer assigns a brand name, while a generic drug uses the chemical name. Both products have the same active ingredients, strength and dosage form, such as liquid or pill.

Why do generics look different?

For legal reasons, generic drugs look different from their brand-name counterparts. Inactive ingredients such as colors and flavorings are changed. These ingredients do not affect the performance, safety or effectiveness of the generic medication.

How does the FDA ensure that generics are as safe and effective as brand drugs?

The FDA has strict guidelines around generics. They must be the same chemically, with the same medical effect. All generics undergo a multi-step, scientific review of their ingredients and performance. The FDA periodically inspects manufacturing plants, and monitors drug quality even after generics have been approved.

Is my generic drug made by the same company that makes the brand drug?

It is possible that your generic drug may have the same manufacturer as its brand version. Brand drug makers are responsible for manufacturing approximately 50% of generic drugs.

Are generic drugs always made in the same kinds of facilities as brand drugs?

Yes. All generic drug manufacturing facilities must meet FDA standards of good manufacturing practices. The FDA will not permit drugs to be made in substandard facilities and it conducts about 3,500 inspections a year to ensure that standards are met.

Does every brand-name drug have a generic counterpart?

No. Only about half of the brand-name drugs on the market today have a generic alternative. Some drugs are protected by patents and are supplied by only one company.

Do generic drugs take longer to work in the body?

No. Generic drugs work in the same way and in the same amount of time as their brand-name versions.

Why do generic drugs cost less?

The cost of developing new drugs is expensive. Generic drug makers don't have high marketing and upfront investment costs, but they must show that their product is identical – or bioequivalent—to a brand-name drug. You may also save money through a lower copay.

How much can you and your plan save?

The savings based on the cost of the drug can be substantial. Your out-of-pocket cost will generally be less when you choose a generic medication. Consult your plan for copayment details.

Average retail prescription drug prices:

\$72.00 Generic
\$198.00 Brand

Average retail prices, Wolters Kluwer Pharma Solutions, 2010

Learn more about generics

Talk with your doctor, pharmacist or other healthcare provider to learn more about generics.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) includes helpful information via:

- › its website at www.fda.gov
- › a toll-free number (888) 463-6332
- › email at druginfo@fda.hhs.gov

Source: U.S. Food & Drug Administration