



## Generic Drugs

...real medicines at high quality, low cost

### What Is a Generic Drug?

A drug patent gives a drug company the sole right to sell a new drug. The company sells its new drug under its own brand name. By law, other companies cannot sell this drug until the term of the patent is over. When the patent term ends, other drug companies may then sell that drug, but not under the same brand name. These types of drugs are called generics, or generic drugs.

The generic drug has the same active ingredient as the brand name drug, but it may not look like the brand name drug. The generic drug usually has its own shape or color. This does not affect how it works. For example, Cipro is the brand name drug containing the active ingredients, ciprofloxacin. The generic version is also sold as ciprofloxacin.

#### They are the same as brand name drugs...

When used as directed, a generic drug is the same as a brand name drug:

- It works the same way in the body
- It is as safe.
- It has the same use.
- It is taken the same way.
- It has the same quality.

#### ...But they cost less!

Generic drugs cost less than brand name drugs. The U.S. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services says, if people use generic drugs, they can save at least 59 percent in drug costs.

#### Their quality is ensured by the FDA

- Each generic drug is tested. It must enter the bloodstream at the same rate and extent as the brand name drug.
- Generic drugs must also be tested to show they are stable, and just like the brand name drug, are good until the expiration date.
- A generic drug must have the same active drug ingredients, and the same strength and quality as the brand name drug.
- FDA inspects the factories where generic drugs are manufactured.
- FDA decides whether generic drugs are safe and of high quality before they are sold in the USA.

**Ask Your Pharmacist!**



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