



Generic Drugs May be Right for You

Talk to your doctor to see if using generic drugs is an option for you. They are safe, effective, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and perhaps will save you money, too.

What is a generic drug?

A generic drug contains the same active ingredients as its brand counterpart, and is also approved by the FDA. When compared to the brand drug, a generic drug is chemically the same, is as safe, and works just as well in the body. But the generic drug often costs much less.

There are two types of generics:

- A **generic equivalent** is made with the same active ingredients at the same dose as the brand drug. You can expect the same results as you get with the brand drug.
- A **generic alternative** is often used to treat the same condition, but has different active ingredients than the brand drug. So, overall results can vary.

Your pharmacist can often fill a prescription with a generic equivalent without a new prescription from your doctor. But only your doctor can decide whether a generic alternative is right for you.

You pay less for generic drugs.

Some benefit plans offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) use a formulary, which is a list made up of generic drugs and a select group of brand drugs.

If your plan is based on a formulary, you pay the lowest amount for a generic drug, the second lowest amount for a brand drug on the formulary, and the highest amount for a brand drug that is not on the formulary.

Members whose plan is not based on a formulary usually pay less out-of-pocket for generic drugs as well.

**Be informed.
Talk to your doctor.
Start saving now.**



Generic alternatives are available for most brand drugs.

Generic alternatives are available for many brand drugs which do not currently have a generic equivalent, including those listed in the chart to the right. If you are taking one of these brand drugs, you may want to talk to your doctor about a generic alternative, which could save you money.*

Get the most from your pharmacy benefit.

In addition to using generic drugs, following these tips may help you maximize your benefits:

- Ask your doctor to order drugs from the formulary when they are right for you. Formulary drugs are chosen based on many factors, including cost-effectiveness.
- Use a contracting pharmacy and show your member ID card along with your prescription.
- Use online pharmacy resources to get an estimate of your out-of-pocket cost for a prescription, find generic alternatives for a drug, view your claims history and more. Go to bcbsil.com and log into Blue Access for MembersSM to access these resources.

What if I have questions?

Ask your doctor about the choices you have and which drug is right for you. Remember, treatment decisions are always between you and your doctor.

You'll also find more information about generic drugs when you visit bcbsil.com. If you have questions about your prescription drug benefit, call the number on the back of your ID card.

Brand Name [†]	Generic Equivalent or Alternative
Acid Reflux Disease/Ulcer	
Aciphex, Dexilant, Nexium, Prevacid, Prilosec, Protonix, Zegerid	lansoprazole, omeprazole, omeprazole/sodium bicarbonate, pantoprazole
Depression	
Celexa, Effexor, Effexor XR, Lexapro, Paxil, Paxil CR, Pristiq, Prozac, Zoloft, Wellbutrin/SR/XL	citalopram, bupropion, bupropion extended release, escitalopram, fluoxetine, fluoxetine delayed release, paroxetine, paroxetine extended release, venlafaxine, venlafaxine extended release
High Cholesterol	
Altoprev, Crestor, Lescol, Lescol XL, Lipitor, Pravachol, Tricor, Vytorin, Zetia, Zocor	atorvastatin, lovastatin, pravastatin, simvastatin
Niaspan	niacin extended release
High Blood Pressure	
Aceon, Altace, Atacand, Atacand HCT, Avalide, Avapro, Benicar, Benicar HCT, Cozaar, Diovan, Diovan HCT, Hyzaar, Mavik, Micardis, Micardis HCT, Teveten, Univasc, Uniretic	benazepril, captopril, enalapril, fosinopril, lisinopril, losartan, moexipril, perindopril, quinapril, ramipril, trandolapril, all generic HCT combination products
Catapres-TTS	clonidine
Coreg, Inderal LA, Innopran XL, Toprol XL	atenolol, metoprolol, propranolol, sotalol, timolol
Norvasc	amlodipine, diltiazem, felodipine, isradipine, nifedipine, nimodipine, verapamil
Insomnia	
Ambien, Ambien CR, Edluar, Lunesta, Rozerem, Silenor, Sonata, Zolpimist	zaleplon, zolpidem

* This list is for example only and is not all-inclusive.

† Third-party brand names are the property of their respective owners.