

The Prudent Prescriber

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Pharm Reps ≠ Rational Prescribing

(PR)



(RP)

Pricey Generics:

Be Careful How You Write the Rx

The last three years (2013-2015) have seen a creep in generic prices, about a \$1 a year for an average of ~\$20 per prescription. For the same time frame, branded drugs' average price has risen from \$270 to \$480 per prescription.

Turing and Valeant pharmaceutical companies have made a practice of buying the rights to low cost drugs and then dramatically raising the prices. Previously cheap Daraprim is now going for \$750 a pill.

Recall that \$20 is an average for all generics. Listed below are some not uncommonly prescribed expensive generics and appropriate alternatives. All of the drugs in all of the tables are available as generics. The prices are MAC (Maximum Allowable Costs) – the most that health plans will reimburse pharmacies. Cash paying customers may pay even higher prices.

Antibiotics do

NOT



help
acute bronchitis

β-blockers in post-MI

save lives



Pill splitters save BIG



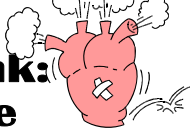
Rx
"Dispensing branded drugs in the office is as anachronistic as blood letting and high colonies."
Anonymous



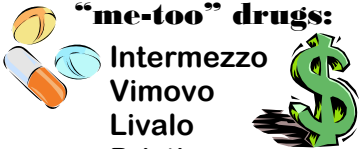
CHE?

Think:

- Ace**
- Aldactone**
- B-blocker**
- Dig**
- Diuretic**



Avoid these expensive "me-too" drugs:



- Intermezzo
- Vimovo
- Livalo
- Pristiq
- Viibyrd
- Edarbi
- Daliresp



Treat patients
> 60 years to 150/90



NOW AVAILABLE
ON THE
GENERIC MARQUEE

- Lunesta → eszopiclone
- Namenda → memantine
- Axert → almotriptan
- Prandimet → repaglinide/metformin
- Jalyn → dutasteride/tamsulosin
- Ortho Tri-Cyclen Lo → Tri-Lo-Marzia, Tri-Lo-Sprintec, & others

Generics To AVOID

Generic Name	Reference Brand	Strength	Form	Cost per Dose
almotriptan	Axert	6.25mg, 12.5mg	tablet	\$28, \$21
zolmitriptan	Zomig	5mg	tablet	\$9.31
zolmitriptan	Zomig	5mg	tablet, disint	\$8.60
sumatriptan	Imitrex nasal	5mg, 20mg	spray	\$52.67, \$50.70
sumatriptan succinate	Imitrex StatDose	4mg/0.5ml	cartridge (ml)	\$179.25
sumatriptan succinate	Imitrex StatDose	6mg/0.5ml	pen injector	\$170.62
sumatriptan succinate	Imitrex StatDose	6mg/0.5ml	cartridge (ml)	\$159.36

Generics to CONSIDER

Generic Name	Reference Brand	Strength	Form	Cost per Dose
rizatriptan benzoate	Maxalt MLT	10mg	tablet, disint	\$1.85
sumatriptan succinate	Imitrex	50mg	tablet	\$1.28

AVOID these Anti-infectives

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
ciprofloxacin ext rel	Cipro XR	500mg	tab ext rel 24 hr	\$19.38 @ 1000mg/d
clarithromycin	Biaxin XL	500mg	tab ext rel 24 hr	\$6.92 @ 1000mg/d
moxifloxacin hcl	Avelox	400mg	tablet	\$21.18 @ 400mg/d
doxycycline monohydrate	Oracea	40mg	capsule dr	\$17.70 @ 40mg/d for acne

CONSIDER these Anti-infectives

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
ciprofloxacin	Cipro	500mg	tablet	\$0.76 @ 500mg BID
clarithromycin	Biaxin	500mg	tablet	\$2.60 @ 500mg BID
doxycycline monohydrate	Monodox	50mg	capsule	\$0.36 @ 50mg/d for acne

AVOID these Diabetes Drugs

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
metformin	Glumetza	500mg 1000mg	tablet ER	\$164.76 \$178.14 for 2000mg/d
metformin	Fortamet	1000mg	tab osmotic 24 hr	\$8.50 for 2000 mg/d
pioglitazone hcl/glimepiride	Duetact	30mg-4mg	tablet	\$14.78 for 1 tab/d

CONSIDER these Diabetes drugs

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
metformin hcl	Glucophage XR	750 mg 500 mg	tab osmotic 24 hr	\$0.54 for 2250mg/d (750 mg) \$0.40 for 2000mg/d (500mg)
metformin hcl	Glucophage	850 mg 1000 mg 500 mg	tablet	\$0.16 - \$0.27 for ~2000mg/d
pioglitazone hcl	Actos	30 mg	tablet	\$0.44
Glimepiride	Amaryl	4mg	tablet	\$0.21
	Duetact equivalent (pioglitazone + glimepiride)			\$0.65

So, to be sure your patient gets the inexpensive generic metformin, write for metformin hcl 1000mg (generic Glucophage), not for "metformin 1000mg."

AVOID these naproxen sodium products

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
naproxen sodium	Naprelan	500mg 375mg	tablet, 24 hour	\$11.72 \$11.55
naproxen sodium	Anaprox	550mg 275mg	tablet ER	\$3.76 \$2.62

CONSIDER these naproxen products

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
naproxen	EC-Naprosyn	375mg 500mg	tablet, del rel (EC)	\$0.58 \$0.58
naproxen	Naprosyn	375mg 500mg 250mg	tab	\$ 0.26 \$ 0.22 \$ 0.20

To avoid a Naprelan disaster, write for "naproxen, generic Naprosyn."

AVOID these anti-hypertensives

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
diltiazem hcl	Cardizem CD	360mg	cap, ext rel 24 hr	\$8.28
diltiazem hcl	Cardizem LA	180mg	cap, ext rel 24 hr	\$3.46
verapamil hcl		360mg	cap, ext rel 24 hr	\$3.12

CONSIDER these anti-hypertensives

Generic name	Reference brand	Strength	Form	Cost per day
diltiazem hcl	Dilt XR	180mg	cap, ext rel, degr	\$0.36
amlodipine besylate	Norvasc	10mg 5mg	tab	\$0.10 \$0.10
verapamil hcl		180mg 120mg 80mg	tab, ext rel	\$0.26 \$0.36 \$0.36

Other pricey generics:

☺ Avoid generic fluvastatin (Lescol) \$ 4-6/day versus generics for Lipitor \$0.34/day, Pravachol \$0.31/day, Mevacor \$ 0.16/day and Zocor \$0.11- \$0.15. Crestor will go generic later this month (May 2016) and after 6 months, the price should drop significantly.

☺ Think generic alendronate (Fosamax) \$5/month for osteoporosis rather than generic Actonel (\$105/month) or Boniva (\$29/month).

☺ A \$10 bill will buy 2 days' worth of Paxil CR or 6 weeks' worth of generic Paxil. Paxil CR offers no efficacy or side effect advantage over its more reasonably priced ancestor.

☺ Treating BPH? The generic combo of dutasteride/ tamsulosin (Jalyn) costs \$117 a month. Save big by prescribing the individual components for a total of \$25 a month.

You may access previous issues at <http://www.rmhp.org/providers/prudent-prescriber>.

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