



Understanding **GENERIC DRUGS**

WHAT ARE GENERIC DRUGS?

A generic drug is an interchangeable version of a brand name product. Generic drugs contain the same active medicinal ingredient and are considered therapeutically equivalent to the brand name product although they may differ in shape and colour when compared to the brand name product.

The most important thing to know is that the active ingredients of generic drugs are absorbed into the body at the same rate, deliver the same therapeutic effect and can be safely interchanged with typically higher priced brand medications. All drugs sold in Canada must be approved by Health Canada. Each product must meet strict regulations and both generic and brand name drugs are subjected to the very same rigorous standards. Each province maintains a list of interchangeable generic drugs and their brand name equivalents.

WHY CHOOSE A GENERIC DRUG?

Currently, approximately 65 per cent of all brand name drugs have a generic drug equivalent. Choosing a generic drug is an easy way to get the most out of your drug plan. By using generic drugs when available, you reduce your medication costs keeping your out of pocket expenses and insurance premiums you may be required to pay to a minimum. Lowering total drug costs is key to ensuring your benefits plan costs are sustainable over the long-term, given that drug costs continue to increase.

EXAMPLE:

The estimated monthly cost for a popular brand is \$84.43 compared to \$15.35 for generic. By switching to the generic drug, your plan would save an estimated \$828.96/year, and you reduce your out of pocket expense.

GENERIC DRUGS AND YOUR SAMUEL DRUG PLAN

Your plan has adopted a Mandatory Generic Substitution approach, your pharmacist may play a role in ensuring the lowest priced drug is dispensed on your next pharmacy visit.