

News For Older Americans

Rx for Affordable Health Care: Generic Medicines

(NAPSA)—When it comes to your health, you shouldn't have to make compromises because of the high cost of many prescription medicines. Affordable generic medicines might be the answer to your high health care costs.

Doctors and pharmacists across the United States understand how expensive prescription medicines can be. That's why more than half of all prescriptions filled in the United States last year were generics. Generics offer the same medicine and same results as brand name prescriptions but at a price that can be 30 percent to 80 percent less expensive.

In 2003, for example, the average price of a prescription filled with a generic drug was \$30.56, while the average price of a brand name drug was \$84.21. That's a difference of \$53 per prescription when you choose the generic.

Because of the lower cost, generic medicines allow you to have more money to spend on other things—a vacation, home improvements, or savings for a rainy day.

Are generic medicines the same as the brand? Yes. All generics must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration, the same agency that approves the brand version. And by law, a prescription generic medicine must have the same medicine, strength, dosage as the brand medicine. It also must be



AMERICA'S GENERICS provide the same medicine and produce the same results as their brand counterparts but at a much lower cost.

manufactured under the same strict quality guidelines as the brand.

Because the FDA requires generics to meet high standards, you can be sure that the generic medicine you receive will provide you with the same results as the more expensive brand drug it replaces.

Generic medicines are available for many chronic diseases and new generics reach the market every day. The next time your doctor writes a prescription, ask if an affordable generic medicine is available. Your doctor and pharmacist can help you select the right prescription to improve your life for less.

For more information about generic medicines, visit the FDA at <http://www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/> or the Generic Pharmaceutical Association at <http://www.gphaonline.org/aboutgenerics>.