



From the AU Pharmacy Officer:

## Introducing the TigerMeds Program:

We are pleased to introduce a new publication, "TigerMeds News", which is a service of the Auburn University Pharmaceutical Care Center (AUPCC) and the Auburn University Employee Pharmacy. We hope to provide useful information about medications written in a format that is easy to understand.

The TigerMeds program was introduced in November 2008 as a benefit for Auburn University employees and their dependents who have AU medical insurance. Through TigerMeds, employees who transfer all of their prescription medications to the AU Employee Pharmacy (which is located on campus) can obtain most generic prescription medications free of charge (\$0 co-pay). Through this program, there are several ways that employees and dependents can save on out-of-pocket medication expenses:

- 1) Through TigerMeds, most generic prescription medications are free (\$0 co-pay), which saves you up to \$10 per prescription for all generic medications.
- 2) If you take a brand name medication that does not have a generic

alternative available at this time, there is a possibility that there is another drug that is just as effective that is available as a generic. If your physician agrees to change your medicine, this could save you \$25 to \$50 per month.

- 3) TigerMeds helps save Auburn University money on medical benefits which helps AU hold down the cost of your health insurance premiums.

The most common questions we receive through the TigerMeds program are questions about generic medications.....What are they? How are they different from brand names? Are they effective? Are there any quality concerns? etc. So, the first issue of this newsletter is focused on answering common questions concerning generic medications.

In addition to the TigerMeds program, the AUPCC offers a variety of wellness services and programs to help manage various chronic health problems (in conjunction with your physician), such as asthma, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity.

We hope you will take advantage of this benefit that Auburn University has extended to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the AUPCC at 334-844-4099 ([aupcc4u@auburn.edu](mailto:aupcc4u@auburn.edu)) or the AU

Employee Pharmacy at 334-844-8938  
 ([tigermeds@auburn.edu](mailto:tigermeds@auburn.edu)) . We are located  
 inside the School of Pharmacy at #2155  
 Walker Building. For directions, visit our  
 website at  
<http://pharmacy.auburn.edu/tigermeds/index.htm>

Kindest regards,

*Kimberly Braxton Lloyd, Pharm.D.*

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### TigerMeds...Some Examples:

Condition or Disease	Current Brand-Name Medication	Current Brand-Name Patient Co-Pay	Possible Therapeutic Substitution* with a Generic	TigerMeds Patient Co-Pay** for Generic Product	TigerMeds Savings for Patient
High Blood Pressure	<b>Avalide®</b> (Irbesartan)	\$50 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>lisinopril</b>	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$50 (\$600 / year)
High Cholesterol	<b>Vytorin®</b> (simvastatin 20 mg/ ezetimibe 10 mg)	\$25 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>simvastatin</b> 80 mg	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$25 (\$300 / year)
Allergic Rhinitis	<b>Rhinocort®</b> (budesonide nasal spray)	\$50 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>fluticasone</b>	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$50 (\$600 / year)
Depression	<b>Lexapro®</b> (Escitalopram)	\$25 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>citalopram</b>	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$25 (\$300 / year)
Heartburn	<b>Nexium®</b> (Esomeprazole)	\$25 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>omeprazole</b>	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$25 (\$300 / year)
High Cholesterol	<b>Lipitor®</b> (Atorvastatin)	\$50 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>simvastatin</b>	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$50 (\$600 / year)
Peptic Ulcer	<b>Prilosec®</b> (omeprazole)	\$50 for 30-day supply	Generic <b>omeprazole</b>	\$0 for 30-day supply	\$50 (\$600 / year)

\* with physician approval

\*\* with enrollment in TigerMeds and transfer of all medications to AU Employee Pharmacy

## Save Money with Generic Drugs

So, why do so many people think generic drugs are not as good as brand name drugs? According to Gary Buehler, R.Ph., Director of the FDA's Office of Generic



Drugs, "It's generally believed that if something costs more, it must be of better quality", but this is not true with

medications. Generics have the same standards for quality as brand name products and are just as potent and safe as brands.<sup>1</sup> In addition to being equivalent in safety and effectiveness as its brand name counterpart, generics can save money. In fact, according to the Congressional Budget Office, generic drugs save U.S. consumers an estimated \$8 to \$10 billion dollars a year at retail pharmacies.<sup>2</sup> They cost much less than brand name drugs because the manufacturers of generic drugs do not have the significant expense of research, development, and advertisement that is associated with brand name products.<sup>1</sup> Basically, because generic drug manufacturers do not have to start at the very beginning of research and development, they are able to sell their product for substantially less than brand names.<sup>3</sup> Also, once generic drugs are approved there is greater competition, which helps to keep prices down.

<sup>1</sup>US Food and Drug Administration. "Generic Drugs: Questions and Answers." October 2007. Available at: [www.fda.gov/cder/consumerinfo/generics\\_q&a.htm#as-safe](http://www.fda.gov/cder/consumerinfo/generics_q&a.htm#as-safe)

<sup>2</sup>Office of Generic Drugs. "What are Generic Drugs?" Available at: [www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/](http://www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/)

<sup>3</sup>US Food and Drug Administration. "Protecting Our Health Generic Drugs: What Everyone Should Know." April 2008. Available at: [www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/index.htm](http://www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/index.htm)

## Generics are Safe and Effective

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates the use and manufacture of generic drugs just as it does brand name drugs. By law, all generics must contain the same active ingredients as its counterpart brand name product. By containing the same main ingredient as the brand name drug it copies, generics yield the same medical benefits as the brand name medication. Like brand-name drugs, generic drugs cannot be sold in the United States until they pass the FDA's rigorous inspection and approval process. The difference between generic and brand name drugs are mainly cosmetic in nature.

Generic drugs may look or taste different due to inactive ingredients like dyes, fillers, and binders, but these inactive ingredients also require FDA approval.



US Food and Drug Administration. "Generic Drugs: Questions and Answers." October 2007. Available at: [www.fda.gov/cder/consumerinfo/generics\\_q&a.htm#as-safe](http://www.fda.gov/cder/consumerinfo/generics_q&a.htm#as-safe)



## Fast Facts

- A generic drug that has received approval for substitution for a brand name equivalent is identical to that brand-name drug in dosage form, safety, strength, route of administration, quality, efficacy, and intended use
- Generic drugs work the same way and have the same risks and benefits as brand-name drugs
- The FDA requires that generic drugs must be as high quality, strong, pure, and stable as brand-name drugs
- In the US, trademark laws do not allow generic drugs to look exactly like the brand name drug
- When new drugs are first made they are protected by drug patents for about 10-15 years. Once the patent expires, other drug companies may sell the generic version of the drug. .

- Once generic medications come on the market, competition helps drive the cost down.
- Generic drugs must be approved by the FDA before they can be marketed and sold, just like brand name drugs.

[www.FDA.org](http://www.FDA.org)

## Generic Switches

If you take an expensive brand-name drug for a chronic disease or illness, a generic substitute in the same drug class may be available that will work just as well and cost less. Talk with your physician or pharmacist concerning a less expensive, generic medication. Pharmacists are able to discuss and recommend likely alternatives to more expensive brand names, but may not switch you to a generic without the approval of your physician if the drug is different from the drug you are receiving at the time. Generic alternatives are an affordable means of receiving the care you need causing less of a strain on your finances.

## Helpful Resources for the Consumer about Generic Drugs:

Federal Trade Commission's Facts for Consumers. Available at: [www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/health/hea06.shtm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/health/hea06.shtm)

US Food and Drug Administration Office of Generic drugs. Available at: [www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/](http://www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/)

Generic Pharmaceutical Association. Available at: [www.gphaonline.org](http://www.gphaonline.org)

Humana Generic Drug Guide. Available at: [www.humana.com/members/tools/prescription\\_tools/generic\\_drug.asp](http://www.humana.com/members/tools/prescription_tools/generic_drug.asp)

Web MD frequently asked questions about generic drugs. Available at: [www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/questions-about-generic-drugs-answered](http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/questions-about-generic-drugs-answered)

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