

# 2018 VALUE OF GENERICS



High-quality drugs at lower costs with your Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan.

## How a drug becomes generic

### ALL GENERICS START AS BRANDS

Drug makers spend a lot of money on research and development. Bringing their new, brand name drug to market has huge costs. The brand name drug usually has a 20-year patent. During this time, other drug makers cannot sell a generic version of the drug.

Once the patent expires, other drug makers can start to produce and sell a generic version of the drug. The savings from generics get passed on to you.

## A smart choice no matter what plan

Whether you have Basic Option or Standard Option, generic drugs are one way to save money.

**Generics.** The name sounds pretty plain, but generics are really quite special—the #1 reason being their lower cost.

**Think about it.** In a world of rising health costs that seem out of your control, generics offer a path to lower spending.

**Your support team.** CVS Caremark™ helps you fill, refill, understand and manage your drugs, your health and your costs.



Federal Employee Program.

[fepblue.org](http://fepblue.org)

## High-quality prescription drugs at a low price

When it comes to drugs, generic does not mean low quality. A generic drug is the FDA-approved equivalent of the brand name drug. This means it is the same as the brand name.

### Generic and Brand Name Drugs

#### SAME

Active ingredients  
Strength  
Dosage form (pill, liquid, cream, etc.)  
How it is taken (oral, topical, under tongue, injection, etc.)  
Identical chemical or drug formulation  
Acts on the body with the same strength and absorption process  
What the drug is for, dosing and labeling  
Effect and safety profile  
Follow strict FDA Good Manufacturing Practices rules

#### DIFFERENT

Price  
Inactive ingredients that could affect shape, color or taste

FDA=U.S. Food and Drug Administration

## Generics by Numbers

Millions of Americans use generics to treat a variety of health conditions, from heart disease to cancer.<sup>1</sup> In fact, about 8 in 10 prescriptions filled in the United States are generic drugs.<sup>2</sup>



Generic drugs have saved the U.S. health care system \$1.67 trillion in the last decade, generating \$253 billion in savings in 2016 alone.<sup>3</sup>



The average cost of a generic drug is 80% to 85% less than the cost of its brand name counterpart.<sup>2</sup>

## STUDIES SUPPORT THE USE OF GENERICS

38 published clinical trials comparing generic heart drugs to brand name counterparts showed no evidence that brand name heart drugs worked any better than generic heart drugs.<sup>4</sup>



1. Generic medicines. Generic Pharmaceutical Association. <http://www.gphaonline.org/about/generic-medicines>. Accessed on August 15, 2016.
2. Facts about generic drugs. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. [http://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/consumers/buyingusingmedicinesafely/understandinggenericdrugs/ucm167991.htm#\\_ftnref1](http://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/consumers/buyingusingmedicinesafely/understandinggenericdrugs/ucm167991.htm#_ftnref1). Updated June 28, 2016. Accessed August 11, 2016.
3. IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics. 2017 Generic Drug Access & Savings in the US. <https://accessiblemeds.org/resources/blog/2017-generic-drug-access-and-savings-us-report>. Accessed July 2017.
4. Kesselheim et al. Clinical equivalence of generic and brand name drugs used in cardiovascular disease: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA*. 2008;300(21):2514-2526.
5. Generic drugs: questions and answers. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/QuestionsAnswers/ucm100100.htm>. Updated January 7, 2015. Accessed on August 15, 2016.

**For more information on your plan, the GIP, and where to find the drug list, visit [www.fepblue.org](http://www.fepblue.org) or call the phone number on the back of your member ID card.**



\*Copay, copayment or coinsurance means the amount a plan member is required to pay for a prescription in accordance with a Plan, which may be a deductible, a percentage of the prescription price, a fixed amount or other charge, with the balance, if any, paid by a Plan.

### Statement of Nondiscrimination

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

Para obtener asistencia en español, llame al servicio de atención al cliente al número que aparece en su tarjeta de identificación.

請撥打您 ID 卡上的客服號碼以尋求中文協助。

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## The Experts Say:

"Although generic drugs are chemically identical to their branded counterparts, they are typically sold at substantial discounts from the branded price."<sup>5</sup>

- FDA

"By asking your doctor or pharmacist if there is a generic version of your prescription, you can reduce your health care costs while receiving the same quality of care!"

- Generic Pharmaceutical Association

## Start Saving Checklist

- Ask your doctor to prescribe generics and allow your pharmacist to substitute a generic when possible.
- Say "yes" if your pharmacist asks whether you would like a generic of the brand name drug your doctor prescribed.
- Ask your doctor if there is a generic to treat your condition.
- Get an approval from your doctor before you change to another drug (generic or brand name).

## Standard Option Generic Incentive Program

If you have Standard Option you can save even more money. If you currently use a brand name drug listed on the 2018 Generic Incentive Program (GIP) drug list, we will waive your coinsurance\* for your first 4 prescription fills or refills if you change to a corresponding generic option during the calendar year. You also must fill your prescription at a Preferred retail pharmacy or through the Mail Service Pharmacy to participate in the GIP.