

The Wellness Exchange May 2009



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Solutions for a Healthier WorkplaceSM

For more information call 1-800-765-3277 or visit www.bhsonline.com

Generic and Brand Name Drugs



Definitions

Drugs are referred to as “brand name” when they are first approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The drugs are produced and sold by one manufacturer’s patent. When the brand name drug’s patent expires, a “generic” drug can be produced.



Patent protection for brand name drugs usually lasts for approximately 20 years. However, not every brand name drug has a generic counterpart.

Are Generic Drugs Different?

It is important to remember that generic drugs are copies of the brand name drug. They are required by the FDA to be the same in dosage, safety, strength, indication, quality, performance and intended use. Generic drugs have the same active ingredients as well as the same risks and benefits.

The only difference between generic and brand name is the way the drug looks. The U.S. trademark laws do not allow generic drugs to look exactly like their brand name equivalent so some of the inactive ingredients such as colors and flavors will be different.



Safety Regulations

All generic drugs are approved by the FDA. They must meet the same rigid standards as the brand name drug.

To gain FDA approval, a generic drug must:

- contain the same active ingredients as the brand name drug (inactive ingredients may vary)
- be identical in strength, dosage form, and route of administration
- have the same use indications
- be bioequivalent
- meet the same batch requirements for identity, strength, purity, and quality
- be manufactured under the same strict standards of FDA’s good manufacturing practice regulations required for brand name products

Formulary Drugs

Formulary drugs are specific prescription drugs that are covered under a drug benefit plan. Formularies, or drug lists, can contain both brand name and generic drugs. Each prescription drug plan is different and will have its own set of guidelines. Therefore, contact your benefits representative and ask if your plan has a formulary.

Learn More

To learn more about your generic drugs, talk with your doctor, pharmacist or insurance company.

You can also visit the FDA website, <http://www.fda.gov/> or call 1-888-INFO-FDA for more information.

Business Health Services is a free and confidential program provided by your employer for you and your household members. BHS can help resolve personal and professional problems.

For additional information call BHS today.

1-800-765-3277



Mental Health in Older Americans

The Facts

The mental health of older adults has become a public health issue in the U.S. Good mental health is essential to an individual's overall well-being. This must be recognized and understood with older Americans and treated with the same importance as physical health. To help broaden mental health awareness in older adults, **May 24-30, 2009 is designated as Older American's Mental Health Week.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), approximately 20% of adults 55 or older experience a mental health concern. The most common problems are mood disorders (such as depression), anxiety and severe cognitive impairment.

Behavioral Risk Factors

- Inadequate social and emotional support
- Life dissatisfaction
- Frequent mental distress
- Current depression
- Lifetime diagnosis of depression and/or anxiety



Next Step

Talk to your doctor about any mental health concerns. Help is available! Research has shown that treatment for mental health is just as effective for older adults as other age groups. For additional information and resources, please visit the following websites:

www.mentalhealthweek.org

www.cdc.gov

Master's Level Clinicians are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to speak with you about any issues you may be experiencing. Call us today!

1-800-765-3277

Facts to Know

- Mental health problems are not part of the normal and healthy aging progress. During any given year, 1 in 4 older adults have a diagnosable mental disorder.
- Mental health is as important as one's physical health. Good mental health contributes to one's feeling of well-being, whereas untreated mental health disorders can lead to slower recovery from physical illness, decreased functioning, and poor quality of life.
- By taking care of both physical and mental health issues, as well as maintaining social connections, older adults can continue to thrive.
- Older adults are at risk for mental illness. Regardless of history, mental health problems can appear late in life.
- Older adults are not getting adequate care for mental health disorders. The majority of older adults with a mental disorder do not receive the care they need. Moreover, Medicare only covers 50% of the cost for a mental health problem, compared to the 80% for a physical health problem. Research has shown, however, that treatment for mental health is just as effective for older adults as other age groups.
- Misdiagnosis and avoidance is common. In fact, primary care physicians fail to diagnose depression in 50% of their patients.