

Myth: Generics are not as safe as brand-name medications.

Fact: FDA requires that all medications be safe and effective and that their benefits outweigh their risks. Since generics use the same active ingredients and are shown to work the same way in the body, they have the same risk-benefit profile as their brand-name counterparts.

Myth: Brand-name medications are made in modern manufacturing facilities, and generics are often made in substandard facilities.

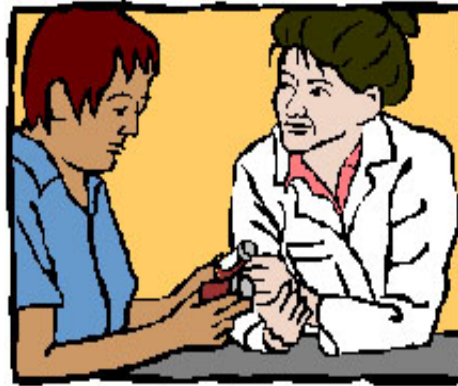
Fact: FDA won't permit medications to be made in substandard facilities. FDA conducts about 3,500 inspections a year in all firms to ensure standards are met. Generic firms have facilities comparable to those of brand-name firms. In fact, brand-name firms account for an estimated 50% of generic medication production. They frequently make copies of their own or other brand-name medications but sell them without the brand-name.

Myth: Generic medications are likely to cause more side effects.

Fact: There is no evidence of this. FDA monitors reports of adverse medication reactions and has found no difference in the rates between generic and brand-name medications.

YOU & YOUR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL

Review Your Medications



Take time to understand your medications and reduce the likelihood for complications.



Pharmacy Benefits Division
TRICARE Management Activity
www.tricareonline.com

Tips For:

MANAGING YOUR MEDICATIONS



TRICARE Management Activity
Department of Defense - Pharmacy
Benefits Division

HOW CAN I PROPERLY MANAGE MY MEDS?

Twelve easy-to-follow tips to better your understanding of your medications and to reduce the likelihood of unnecessary and avoidable complications.

1. Keep a personal list of all drug therapy, including prescription medications, nonprescription medications, home remedies, and medical foods that you take and show it to the health care professional(s) managing your care.

2. Maintain a list of medications that you cannot take (for reasons like allergic reactions). Give the reasons why, and show it to the health care professional(s) managing your care.

3. If you are currently taking several different medications, use a daily organizer to keep track.

4. Learn the names of the medications and products that are prescribed and administered to you, as well as their dosage strength and schedules.

5. Keep medications in their original containers. Avoid storing different medications together in the same container unless you are currently using a daily organizer clearly identifying your medications. This will avoid confusion with identification and administration.

6. Be familiar with your medications. Make sure to open and check your medications before leaving the pharmacy. Question anything you don't understand or that doesn't seem right—changes in medication size, shape, color, smell, and markings.

7. Be aware of any potential side effects of the medications or products you are currently using. Ask your pharmacist for a medication information sheet if it is not already provided when you receive your prescriptions. You can also refer to our website at www.tricareonline.com for additional information.

8. Ask your health care professional(s) if you should avoid certain foods, beverages, other medicines or activities while you are taking the medication(s).

9. If you are pregnant or breast feeding, ask your health care professional before taking any prescription or over-the-counter medications.

10. Take medications exactly as directed by your health care professional. Only use your medications for their intended purposes. Avoid saving medications beyond the time period they are prescribed. **Avoid storing medications in the bathroom** or in places with temperature change. Old and unused medications can result in useless or harmful effects if stored in a place with moisture or temperature change or if administered past the expiration date.

Communicating with your health care professionals is the easiest way to avoid unnecessary medication problems.

11. When traveling, be sure to carry your medications with you, not in your luggage.

12. If you are unable to use your medications and/or products correctly, ask a family member or friend to help. Be sure person(s) assisting you are familiar with these tips.

MYTHS & FACTS ABOUT GENERIC MEDICATIONS

Myth: *Generics take longer to act in the body.*

Fact: The firm seeking to sell a generic medication must show that its medication delivers the same amount of the active ingredient in the same timeframe as the original product.

Myth: *Generics are not as potent as brand-name medications.*

Fact: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires generics to have the same quality, strength, purity, and stability as brand-name medications.