



# FAST FACTS

## About Generics



According to the Canadian Food and Drug Act, generics are required to be equivalent to brand-name drugs in terms of dosage, safety, strength, quality, the way they work and the way they're taken.



Health Canada requires generic drug applicants to scientifically demonstrate that their product is "bioequivalent," meaning that it performs in the same way as the brand-name drug.



A generic may differ slightly in size, color, taste or shape from the brand-name drug; however, it must have the same active ingredient(s) and work the same way. The differences in appearance do not affect the generic drug's safety or effectiveness.



In Canada, a generic costs, on average, 60% less than the brand drug.



Using generics whenever possible is one of the best ways to reduce health care costs.

- Generic drugs accounted for only 21.8% of the \$27.5-billion Canadians spent on prescription medicines.
- For every one percent increase in the use of generic medicine Canadians will save an additional \$527-million



Generics provide the same therapeutic benefits as brand-name drugs but at more affordable prices. Since generics use the same active ingredients and work the same way in the body as the brand-name drug, they have the same risks and benefits.



Bioequivalence is demonstrated by showing that the generic medication delivers the same amount of active ingredients into a patient's bloodstream in the same amount of time as the brand-name drug.



Generic drugs typically cost far less than brand-name drugs because generic drug companies do not have to spend money repeating the same clinical trials, or spending money on advertising, marketing or promotion.



The use of generic medicines saved governments, employers and patients more than 22-billion dollars in 2017.



# MYTHS AND FACTS

## About Generic Drugs



**Choosing Generics**

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### MYTHS

### FACTS

**You get what you pay for, so expensive brand-name drugs must work better**



#### Lower price doesn't mean inferior

Generic medicines are bioequivalent to their brand-name versions in dosage form, safety, strength, route of administration, quality, performance characteristics and intended use.

**You need to take a higher dose of a generic drug than a brand-name drug**



#### The dosing of generic and brand-name drugs is the same

All generic drugs must be the same in terms of how they work and how much must be taken compared with brand-name drugs. There is no evidence that brand-name drugs work better than other drugs.

**Generic drugs cause more allergic reactions and side effects**



#### There is no conclusive data available that generic drugs cause more allergies/side effects than brand-name drugs

A few people might have side effects when switching from one drug to another, but this does not happen more often with generic drugs than with brand name drugs.

**Generics don't have to pass the same quality tests as brand-name medicines**



#### Generic drugs must be approved by Health Canada

Just like brand-name drugs, generic drugs must be approved by Health Canada, that oversees the quality and safety of all drugs sold in Canada. It also ensures that manufacturing plants meet the same stringent quality standards as companies that make brand-name drugs.

**Generic drugs look and act differently than brand drugs**



#### Generic drugs are bioequivalent to the brand-name drugs

Generic drugs may have different nonmedicinal ingredients that may affect the colour, size or shape of the generic drug. However, these are still bioequivalent to the brand-name drug, and act in the same way as the brand-name drug.

**My doctor or pharmacy wants me to take generic drugs just to save money**



#### Generic drugs offer no economic benefits to the doctor or pharmacy

Your doctor and local pharmacist likely want you to receive the medicine that is safe, effective and most affordable. Generic drugs often represent the best choice in terms of cost.

**It's not good to switch to a generic drug if you have been taking a brand-name drug for a long time**



#### It is generally safe to switch from brand-name drugs to generic drugs – caution should be taken in patients who may be allergic or intolerant to excipients of the generic drug

For these patients, check The Health Canada Product Database to retrieve/view Product Monographs: <https://health-products.canada.ca/dpd-bdpp/index-eng.jsp>





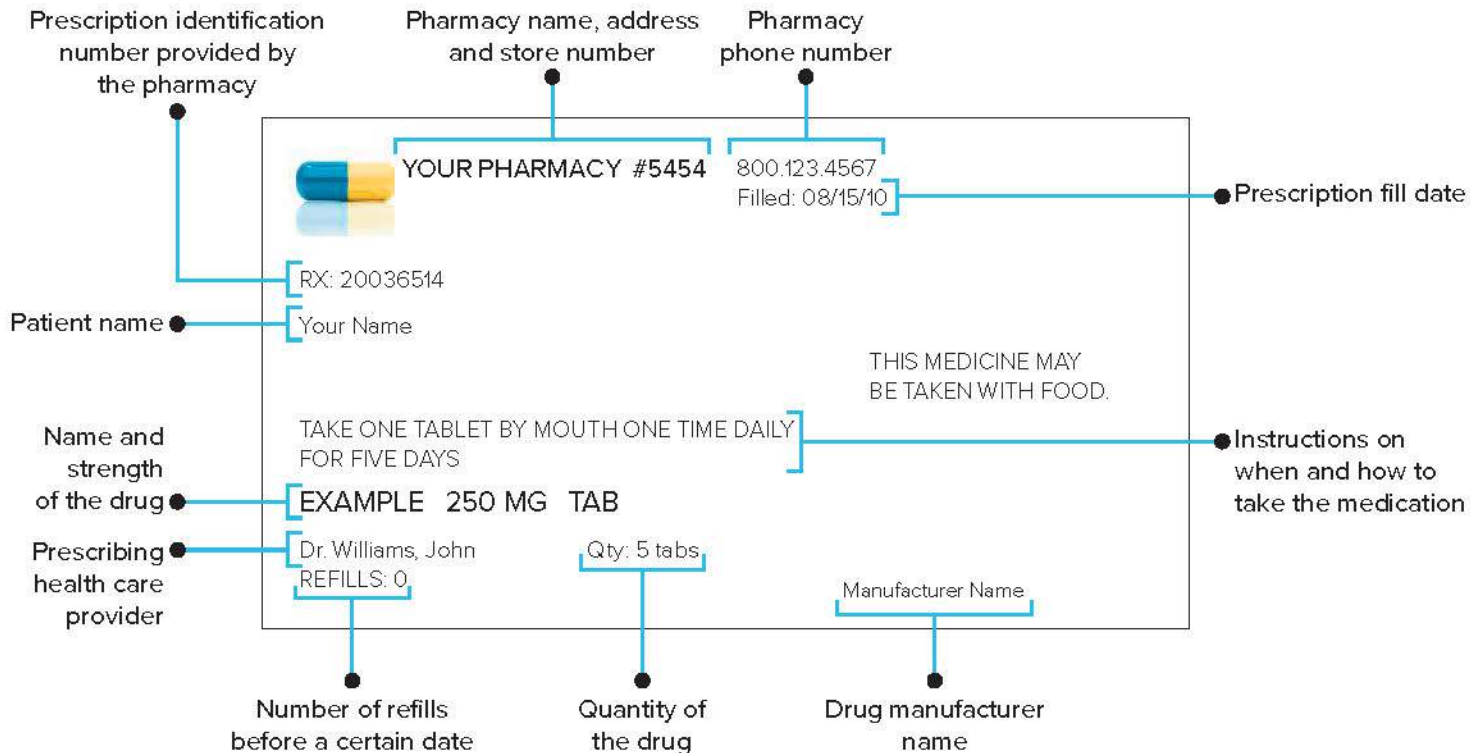
# HOW TO READ

## My Prescription Drug Label



**Choosing Generics**  
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**When using any medication, it's very important to carefully read the prescription drug label.**



- ◆ A typical drug label that a pharmacy puts on your medication may contain the following information.
- ◆ This is being supplied for informational purposes only and to facilitate your understanding of the information that may be contained on the label.
- ◆ This example is by no means an exhaustive list of the possible information contained on all your prescription drug package labels.
- ◆ Note, the information provided on the prescription drug label may differ depending on the pharmacy you go to or by the province you reside in so your actual label may look different.
- ◆ Consult your pharmacist or doctor if you have any questions about the information on your prescription label.