

fast facts about generics

- According to the Canadian Food and Drug Act Regulations, generics are required to be equivalent to brand drugs in terms of dosage, safety, strength, quality, the way they work and the way they're taken.
- Generics provide the same therapeutic benefits as brand drugs but at more affordable prices. Since generics use the same active ingredients and work the same way in the body as the brand, they have the same risks and benefits.
- 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.
- 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 drug.
- Generic drugs typically cost far less than brand drugs because generic drug companies do not have to spend money repeating the same clinical trials as the brands and do not have the same expenses as brand drug manufacturers, such as for advertising, marketing and promotion.
- In Canada, a generic costs, on average, 60% less than the brand drug.
- In 2011, the use of generic drugs instead of the brand equivalent has reduced the costs for drugs in the Canadian health care system by \$8.5 billion.
- A generic may differ slightly in size, color, taste or shape from the brand 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.
- Using generics whenever possible is one of the best ways to reduce health care costs.