

Everything you need to know about generic medications as a safe, effective option.

1 Can I trust a generic medication to be the same as a brand-name medication?

Yes! Before it can be marketed, a generic medication undergoes studies and testing to prove it works the same as the brand-name reference product. To be approved by Health Canada, generic medications must:

- contain the same amount of active ingredient as the brand-name product (in spite of some misconceptions that have been circulating in the media, they cannot contain more or less active ingredient)
- reach the same concentration (that is, get to the same level in the bloodstream in the same amount of time) to be considered “bioequivalent”
- meet the strict manufacturing-quality requirements, set by Health Canada, that apply to both generic and brand-name medications.*

2 What about non-active ingredients?

Because generic medications contain the same active ingredient as the brand-name drug, side effects from the active ingredient will be the same.

Medications also contain non-active ingredients, which allow us to make a tablet or capsule that is homogeneous and delivers a correct and usable dosage of active ingredient. In many cases, we use the same non-active ingredients as the brand-name drug—often from the exact same supplier!

There are instances in which the non-active ingredients may differ slightly (although they must still meet rigorous testing and national standards). It is possible that some people are sensitive to this difference.

All of our medications are accompanied by a patient-information leaflet. This leaflet provides information on non-active ingredients.

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3 How can I trust that Teva's generic medications are safe?

At Teva, we produce hundreds of different medications in Canada and around the world, in facilities specifically designed for manufacturing high-quality, affordable pharmaceuticals. For us, quality is not a department, but a culture and philosophy that focuses on continuous improvement and collaboration at all stages of our manufacturing process.

In fact, Teva Canada is audited every two years by Health Canada and the US FDA. In the past five years alone, we have hosted 40 inspections—seven from the FDA, 15 from Health Canada, 11 from customers and seven from our internal global inspection partners—all of which have been successful.

4 Why do generic drugs cost less?

At Teva, we make brand-name and generic drugs, so we understand the critical role that both types of medications play in Canadian healthcare.

When a company invents a new medication, they have to recoup their research investment, which is why brand-name drugs are protected by patents and their prices are higher.

When the patent expires, generic versions of the drug can be produced. The generic-drug manufacturer can use much of the research that has already been conducted, allowing them to offer patients greatly reduced costs for the same medicine—on average, costs that are 60% to 80% lower.

In addition to matching the safety, efficacy and quality of the brand-name products, generic drugs bring savings to you, your employer-sponsored drug plan and the healthcare system—savings that can be reinvested in other areas of healthcare for Canadians.

Make smart choices—ask for generic medicine from a top-quality company with a well-established track record.

If you have any questions about your medications, please speak with your physician or pharmacist.