Get the facts about GENERIC DRUGS

MYTHS

Generics are always much cheaper than their brand-name counterpart.

Fact: Whenever a brand-name product no longer has exclusivity, generics can begin to submit applications for approval of their product. The first generic to submit is granted 6 months of exclusivity to sell their product without competition. During this time, the decrease in price may be less dramatic than when in the market with competition from other companies.

FDA allows a large range for generic products to say they are the same as the branded product.

Fact: The absorption of a drug inevitably has some range of variance between individuals. Therefore, the FDA requires the extent of absorption from a generic product to be within 80-125% of the reference product, showing they are not different.

Brand-name and generic products all have exactly the same ingredients.

Fact: Generic products are required to have the same active ingredient as their brand-name counterparts; however, they may use different inactive ingredients as long as they do not present differences in the safety or effectiveness of the product. This can be important for certain patients with allergies to certain inactive ingredients.

FDA accepts a larger variation of drug potency for generic medications than brand-name medications.

Fact: Each batch, either the brand-name or generic product, must show drug potency to be within 90% of the labeled potency.

Switching between brand-name and generic or between different generics has no effect on patient outcomes.

Fact: The FDA requirement for equivalence is between 80-125% of the reference drug which means there could be up to a 20% difference in the available amount of drug. For some drugs with Narrow Therapeutic Indexes, these changes can have significant clinical effects.

Learn more about generic drugs by visiting chestfoundation.org/generics

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