

New York State Medicaid Generic Drug Program

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE WITH
MEDICAID AND FAMILY HEALTH PLUS



What is the Generic Drug Program?

The law requires doctors to prescribe the generic version of a drug, unless they get special approval for a brand name drug.

What is a generic drug?

A generic drug is a copy of a brand name drug. It is the same medicine with the same active ingredients as the brand name drug, but usually made by another company.

Is a generic drug as good as a brand name drug?

Yes. The federal government makes certain that the generic drug is as safe and effective as the brand name drug. (You may already be taking generic drugs).

What if I am taking a brand name drug that has a generic version?

Medicaid will not pay for your brand name drug unless your doctor calls Medicaid to get approval, and writes the approval number on your prescription.

Need help? Call the Medicaid Helpline:
1-800-541-2831



Remember:

- Only your doctor can decide which drugs you should take.
- Generic drugs are safe and effective copies of brand name drugs and are approved by the federal government.
- Ask your doctor and pharmacist about generic drugs.

What if my doctor forgets to get the approval for my brand name drug?

The pharmacist can call your doctor to discuss if the generic drug is right for you.

What if I really need my medicine and the doctor's office is closed?

In an emergency, if you have a valid prescription, the pharmacist may give you a small supply of the brand name drug until you can talk to someone at your doctor's office or clinic.

Why are my pills a different color than they used to be?

Generic pills may look different because they are made by another company. They may be a different color or shape, but they are as safe and effective as the brand name drug.



State of New York
Department of Health