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**DLCA CONSUMER TIPS**

The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) is pleased to release consumer friendly tips that should be taken into consideration when purchasing prescription medication.

**Consumer tips on prescription medication:**

- **Generics vs. Brand Name Medications-** Consumers should always ask their doctor or pharmacist if a generic brand is available for their particular prescription medication. Generic drugs are usually less expensive than their brand name counterparts. This price difference is mainly due to the high cost of research and development associated with producing brand name drugs; however, there are other factors to consider. Advertising costs for brand name drugs are extremely high, and recouping this cost is a major consideration when its manufacturer sets a drug's retail price.

A generic drug *is identical or the bioequivalent* to a brand name drug in dosage form, safety, strength, route of administration, quality, performance characteristics and intended use. Generic drugs are drugs that contain the same pharmacological ingredients as name brand products but at a fraction of the cost. This occurs when name brand drugs lose their patent and become part of the public domain. Health professionals and consumers can be assured that FDA approved generic drugs have met the same rigid standards as the innovator (brand) drug.

Generic drugs may sometimes be shaped differently from brand names, such as a generic tablet versus a brand name capsule. But they still have the same active ingredients and are manufactured to the same standards as brand name medications. Generic drugs look different than brand name drugs because trademark laws do not allow generics to look exactly like brand name drugs. Colors, flavors and other inactive and inert ingredients such as fillers may be different.

**CONSUMER TIPS**



*"Serving Businesses and Assisting, Educating & Protecting Consumers"*