



What should I do if I experience problems with my generic medicine?

It is very unlikely that this will happen as they are all made to the same high standard as the branded version.

Very occasionally the other ingredients in a medicine that are not active (called excipients) may not agree with you. In this case you can ask your community pharmacist to supply you with a generic medicine made by a different manufacturer to see if this suits you better.

Can all medicines be prescribed by generic name?

In most cases yes, however, for some medicines it is best for you to take the same branded product. An example of this would be when you are taking tablets and capsules that have special coatings so the medicine acts more slowly in the body. Your doctor will know which medicines should be prescribed by brand and you should always take this brand.

What should I do if I am worried about a change in the appearance and name of my medicine?

Doctors and pharmacists know which drugs can be safely prescribed and dispensed by generic name. Discuss any worries or concerns with your doctor or pharmacist.

If you would like to discuss any information contained in this leaflet or have any other query please ask your pharmacist or doctor.

**Remember
Generic Medicines – Same Medicine, Same Quality,
Same Effect**

**Information
for Service Users and Carers
on Generic Prescribing**

Doctors at Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust are encouraged to prescribe medicines by their generic name. This leaflet explains what generic prescribing is and the benefits it can bring. It also answers some frequently asked questions about generic medicines.

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Medicines Management

Every medicine has an approved generic name and will often have one or more brand (trade) names.

What are generic and brand names?

- **Generic name** – this is the approved name for a medicine (drug). Every medicine has an approved (*generic*) name.
- **Brand name** - many medicines also have one or more *brand* names. This is chosen by the company that makes it. The name is often chosen to be memorable for advertising, or to be easier to say or spell than the generic name! For example, paracetamol is a generic name. There are several companies that make paracetamol with brand names such as Panadol®, Calpol®, etc.

What is generic prescribing?

Doctors at Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust are encouraged to prescribe using the generic name. This is because:

- The generic name is the one doctors are trained to use. There are sometimes many brand names for one medicine. Possible confusion or mistakes are reduced if all doctors use the same names when talking about and prescribing medicines.
- Generic medicines are usually less expensive and can save the NHS millions of pounds. Savings made in this simple way can be used to benefit you and other service users with no change in the effectiveness of your treatment.

What about the quality of generic medicines?

The Government ensures that generic medicines are made to the same standard as branded medicines, so they are as safe and effective and of the same high quality. In fact, many of the companies that make branded products also make generic medicines.

Generic medicines contain the same medicinal ingredient and are identical in strength to the branded medicine, so they treat your condition just the same.

Why do generic medicines cost less?

The original manufacturer of a new branded medicine has a number of years to recover the costs of developing that medicine. After that, any licensed manufacturer can make the same product. As more than one company can make the medicine it tends to be a lower cost and this can benefit the NHS.

Will I notice any difference?

There may be some difference in the colour, shape, size, or taste and this can vary between different manufacturers of generic medicines. This however is only in the outward appearance and does not affect the medicine or the way it works.

The packaging will also look different so do not be alarmed. Look for the generic name on the box and on the dispensing label to check the correct medicine has been supplied.