Wellness Newsletter
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Brand Name Drugs vs. Generics: Is There a Difference?

What are the differences between generic and name brand drugs? What makes the price different? Is there a difference in quality?

Cost is the main difference between generic and brand name drugs. Makers of brand name drugs want to “brand” their identity – and the way to do that is through advertising. Companies pay large amounts of money to catch your attention, and that money factors into the cost you pay.

Active ingredients – things that make the brand name drug work in the first place – are also found in the generic version. What might be different are the generic drug’s inactive ingredients. These are things that might affect how quickly a drug is released, or change the size and shape of the pill.

There has been some incidental evidence suggesting some types of drugs may react significantly differently between the generic and brand. According to the FDA, they all undergo and meet the same strict regulations for safety and producing the desired effect. Some doctors may not want to risk even the small chance that a generic will react differently from the brand so you need to have that conversation with your doctor to figure out what’s best for you.

If you switch to a generic and notice you’re reacting differently you can try a different generic or stay on the brand name, but you may end up paying more.

With most generics you’re probably not going to see any difference at all, except you might find a bit more cash in your wallet.

Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN Chief Medical Correspondent,

Recipe for Sun Protection

Choose your favorite sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 or 30. Then squeeze, dollop, wipe or smear as follows:

- Face and neck (½ teaspoon)
- Arms and shoulders (½ teaspoon to each side)
- Torso (¼ teaspoon to front and back)
- Legs and tops of feet (1 teaspoon to each side)

Thickness of sunscreen application is important. If not enough is applied to the skin, its SPF effectiveness could drop. So apply it thickly and thoroughly 30 minutes before going outside.

www.msu.edu

Don’t rely on last year’s sunscreen, since some ingredients degrade over time. Go to www.ehow.com/how_108901_buy-sunscreen.html for helpful and quick tips on buying fresh sunscreen.

Bulletin Board – tip of the month

Celery has ‘negative calories!’ It takes more calories to eat and digest a piece of celery than the celery contains to begin with.

Snopes.com

Keep Your Veggies Healthy!

Check out these prepping and cooking suggestions that will preserve taste and nutrition.

Prepping/cleaning

Whenever possible, keep the peel (like with cucumbers, zucchini and sweet potatoes). The outer skins of vegetables are often nutrient-rich, and can have much of the fiber to boot.

To get the most health benefits from vegetables:

- Avoid soaking. Try swishing vegetables in a sink full of plain water to remove dirt or debris.
- You can also use a soft brush to remove dirt that clings.
- Discard the outer leaves of leafy veggies to cut down on pesticide residue.

Cooking

When you cook foods in water or other liquids, both vitamins and minerals leach out into the cooking liquid and end up going down the drain. (Unless your intention is to make soup!)

For maximum nutrient retention, use the following cooking methods:

- **Steaming** is the optimal method for preserving the most nutrients. Most veggies should be cooked until barely tender or tender-crisp (about five to six minutes). Harder vegetables such as potatoes, carrots and corn will need around 15 to 20 minutes.
- **Microwaving** is generally considered a good method for preserving nutrients. Use little water and don’t overcook.
- **Roasting** is a simple and delicious way to cook vegetables while preserving the vitamins, flavors and minerals. In a large bowl, cover sliced vegetables with olive oil. Add garlic powder, onion powder, salt and pepper. Place them in a baking pan and roast at 350 degrees F until tender (usually around an hour).
- **Grilling**. Cubed veggies such as eggplant, bell pepper squares, cherry tomatoes and sliced zucchini can be coated lightly with vegetable oil spray or brushed lightly with olive oil before grilling.

If you choose to boil your veggies, do so in a small amount of water and do not overcook. Cover the pan and cut pieces as large as possible to minimize nutrient losses.

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