About Generic Pet and Equine Prescriptions

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Questions and answers from our Pharmacists

Our first concern is for the health of your pets, including horses. Because there are no government programs to subsidize pet healthcare, and pet insurance is still new, the burden of cost for medications falls entirely on the owner. By keeping our prescription medications affordable and by offering economical FDA-approved bio-equivalents (generics), we believe more pets and horses will be able to receive the quality of care they deserve to live a healthier life.

With the costs of medicines escalating, it's nice to know that you can save money on your pet's medications with generics, just as you do for yourself and your family. Most veterinarians, in fact, use a combination of human, veterinary-only, and compounded medications for treating the medical condition of your pets, including horses. Generics are available for many medications to save money without compromising health.

Q: Are generic drugs equivalent to brand name drugs?

A: Yes. Generic equivalents of brand-name drugs have the same active ingredients and potency, are available in the same dosage forms (for example, tablet, liquid, or injectable), and are demonstrated safe and effective. Although inactive ingredients such as fillers and dyes can be different, these ingredients should not affect the efficacy of the drug in any way. Since 1984, no generic drug has been approved in the U.S. unless it has been shown to have the same rate and amount of active drug absorbed as the brand name.

Q. Are generics as safe as name brands?

A: As a group, generics have no proven side effects that are different from brand-names and are considered as safe. The FDA allows no drug on the market unless it is proven to meet their stringent safety, efficacy, and manufacturing standards. All generics are put through a rigorous multi-step approval process before they are considered brand equivalents. The FDA can also recall products if they don't meet production standards, and can even stop the manufacture of products until the manufacturing firm shows that it can make and test its drugs in a way that meets their high standards.

Q: How much money can I save with generic equivalents?

A: On the average, most generics are about half the price of the brand name, and some generics may cost up to 2/3 less than the brand-name version. There are several reasons for this, most notably, competitive pricing since there can be several different providers of generic equivalents.

Q: How can I make sure I can get a generic?

A: The laws governing generic substitution vary significantly from state to state. Only a licensed veterinarian, upon physical examination of your pet or horse, can determine which drug may yield the optimal result for the condition being treated. However, unless the veterinarian writes DAW, NS, or Brand Medically Necessary on the prescription, you have the freedom to choose whether you want the brand name or the generic product. In some states, pharmacies must dispense the generic unless the veterinarian or owner requests no substitution. In other states, the pharmacy must receive

BRAND VS. GENERIC COST SAVINGS

Human medications being dispensed in the veterinary field		
Brand Name Drugs	**Generic Name Drugs**	**Save %**
Cleocin 150mg	Clindamycin 150mg*	82%
Pepcid 40mg	Famotidine 40mg*	55%
Atarax 25mg	Hydroxyzine 25mg*	37%
Flagyl 400mg	Metronidazole 400mg*	65%
Bactrim DS 960mg	SMZ - TMP DS*	83%
Veterinary Products		
Antirobe 150mg	Clindamycin 150mg*	58%

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other states, the pharmacy must receive authorization from both the veterinarian and the pet owner before a generic equivalent can be dispensed. In these cases, if you prefer the generic, please contact us so we can discuss alternatives with you.

Enacard 5mg	Enalapril 5mg*	81%
Heartgard Plus 68mcg*	Tri-Heart® Plus 68mcg*	38%
Heartgard Plus 136mcg*	Tri-Heart® Plus 136mcg*	25%
Heartgard Plus 272mcg*	Tri-Heart® Plus 272mcg*	14%
** product we carry in our Pharmacy*		

Since we believe that the final choice is yours, we will not substitute a generic drug unless you request it and the generic substitution is in accordance with your state's laws. We are a licensed pharmacy and are prepared to answer your questions and discuss generic alternatives with you, such as assisting you in finding the right dosage form that your veterinarian has prescribed at the lowest possible cost.

How can I learn more about generics?

Every medication listed on DrsFosterSmith.com is accompanied by detailed product information, FAQ's, and a Patient Information Sheet. Additionally, the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) branch of the FDA offers a reference for generic equivalence called the "Green Book," which is available to all consumers on the internet at www.fda.gov/cvm (enter search term "green book").

Generic Close-up: Tri-Heart Plus

SAVE when you order this FDA-approved generic equivalent to Heartgard for protection against heartworm infection.

Tri-Heart Plus is an FDA-approved generic equivalent to Heartgard Plus for the protection against heartworm infection and for control of certain intestinal worms. The active ingredients of Tri-Heart Plus are ivermectin and pyrantel, a safe wormer used to treat roundworms and hookworms. Ivermectin eliminates the larval form of *Dirofilaria immitus*. This prevents the development of the adult stage of the heartworm. Ivermectin works by causing paralysis of the parasite which eventually causes its death. Pyrantel treats and controls ascarids (roundworms such as *T. canis* and *T. leonina*) and hookworm. Administer monthly on the same day each month. Give as prescribed by your veterinarian.

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