Auto Casualty

Generic Medications: Quarterly Drug Update

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In This Quarter's Report, We Identify High-usage Brand Name Drugs and Their Generic Alternatives.

Each quarter, Mitchell Pharmacy Solutions brings you a drug update to help keep you informed about recent changes or trends in pharmacy and prescribing.

Managing the pharmacy portion of a workers' compensation or auto accident-related claim is vital to ensure the best outcomes. An important area to monitor during claims is the usage of brand name medications when generic equivalents are available. **View last quarter's report here.** There are a many important points to understand about generic medications. Among them, the FDA requires that any generic version of a drug be bioequivalent in order to obtain approval. Therefore, they are as safe and as effective as their brand name counterparts. The brand has simply gone off patent. Because of this, generics are typically much more affordable than their brand name alternative. According to the FDA, generic prices can be as much as 85 percent lower than brand name medications. Therefore, many states and formularies require that a generic medication be dispensed instead of a brand name medication, when available. However, some people still receive brand name medications. Many times, it is simply a lack of information that a generic is available at the patient, prescriber, payer or pharmacy level. Formularies also help alert stakeholders to the availability of a generic and recommend a switch. It is also important to note that a physician may document Dispense as Written (DAW) on a prescription. When the physician writes DAW, the pharmacist will fill as written and dispense the brand name drug. As part of our ongoing education for stakeholders, following is a list of some of the highest usage brand name medications with a generic equivalent that could be utilized to improve programs:

Ambien/Ambien CR (zolpidem)

Treats insomnia. Many people have difficulty sleeping after an injury due to the pain/inflammation. Medications used to treat insomnia should only be used short-term. **Brand:** $227 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $11.78 for 30 days' supply

Celebrex (celecoxib)

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID), which is used to treat inflammation and pain associated with that pain. **Brand:** $868 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $454 for 30 days' supply

Duragesic (fentanyl patch)

Long-acting opioid in a patch formulation. Fentanyl of any type should not be used unless the claimant has moderate to severe pain. Fentanyl patches should not be used for acute pain (90 days or less from date of injury). **Brand:** $947 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $263 for 30 days' supply multi-colored-pills-generic

Lipitor (atorvastatin)

Known as a group as 'statins'. This group of drugs is used to treat high cholesterol. **Brand:** $538 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $9.45 for 30 days' supply

Neurontin (gabapentin)

This is mainly an anti-seizure medication. However, it is used primarily in the workers' compensation space to treat neuropathic pain. **Brand:** $837 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $159 for 30 days' supply

Oxycontin (oxycodone extended release)

Long-acting opioid that should only be used for chronic pain (pain that requires treatment beyond three months). **Brand:** $316 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $144 for 30 days' supply

Pennsaid (diclofenac sodium topical solution)

Topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) drug. Applying this topically helps to reduce swelling directly where the solution is applied. **Brand:** $2,984.90 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $194 for 30 days' supply

Percocet (oxycodone/acetaminophen)

Combination pain medication used for mild to moderate pain. **Brand:** $765 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $65 for 30 days' supply

Plavix (clopidogrel)

Anti-platelet medication used to treat recent strokes, transient ischemic attacks (TIA's) or coronary artery disease. Helps to keep blood vessels open to prevent heart attacks and strokes. **Brand:** $464 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $9.40 for 30 days' supply

Soma (carisoprodol)

Muscle relaxants. Muscle relaxants are used in the early stages of an injury to help with the spams associated with muscle injuries. They should not be used long-term. **Brand:** $417 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $5.74 for 30 days' supply pharmacist-drugs-generic

Ultram (tramadol)

Opioid used to treat mild to moderate pain. **Brand:** $366 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $7.83 for 30 days' supply

Vicodin/Norco (hydrocodone/acetaminophen)

Combination opioid used for mild to moderate pain. **Brand:** $259 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $39 for 30 days' supply

Wellbutrin (bupropion)

Antidepressant. This particular anti-depressant also helps to elevate mood. **Brand:** $281 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $16.50 for 30 days' supply

Zoloft (sertraline)

Selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI), a specific type of antidepressant. **Brand:** $382 for 30 days' supply **Generic:** $77 for 30 days' supply



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