

### 3. Why are generic medicines often cheaper than reference medicines?

Generic medicines contain the same active substance(s) as reference medicines.

Since their efficacy and safety have already been demonstrated, less research is required.

This means that both time and money are saved which explains why generic medicines are cheaper.

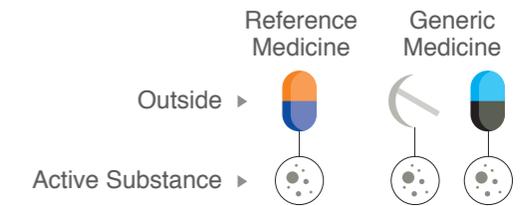
For a few years, the pharmaceutical company launching a new medicine on the market, known as the originator, will have legal safeguards as the only party to sell the product.



# GENERIC MEDICINES QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## 1. What is a generic medicine?

Generic medicines are essentially similar to reference medicines, but come in different forms. The active substance is identical, as is the amount included in the medicine.



## 2. Is it safe to use a generic medicine?

Yes. Research is carried out to secure that generic medicines are of the same quality as reference medicines. This leaflet will guide you on how to properly take your generic medicines. If you have any questions, please contact your doctor and/or pharmacist.

### Same quality and monitoring

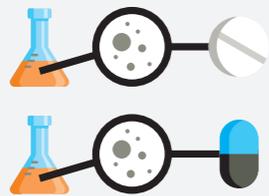
From raw materials to the packaged medicines, the Malta Medicines Authority assesses the safety, quality and efficacy of all medicines, be they generic or originator. Likewise, all medicines are monitored in the same way for any adverse reactions. Sometimes a generic medicine is given instead of your regular medication because the medicine you are familiar with is unavailable.

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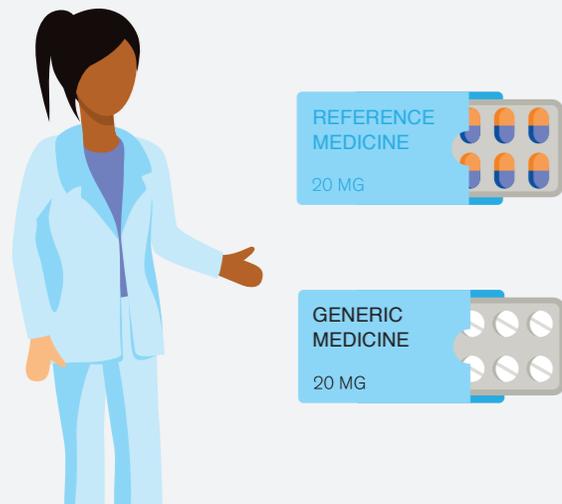
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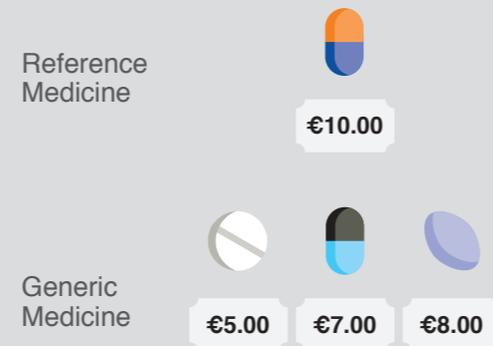
Once the legal protection has expired, other manufacturers are allowed to manufacture medicines that are similar to their originator equivalent, which are called generic medicines.



Now both the reference and generic medicines are on the market. Switching from an originator to a generic medicine normally occurs at this stage.



Generic medicines tend to be cheaper than reference medicines. In this way, choice and accessibility are secured for the benefit of the patient.



#### 4. How do I recognise a generic medicine?

Generic medicines are not allowed to have the same name and packaging as their reference counterparts. The manufacturer of a medicine will often include the name of the active substance in the product's name. The name of the company is normally added to the product's name.



#### 5. Can I safely switch between a reference and a generic medicine?

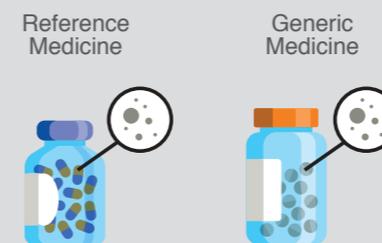
Generally you can switch without any problems. Do you have concerns? If so, ask your doctor and/or pharmacist for help or more information.

#### 6. Is there any difference in efficacy between generic and reference medicines?

No, because generic medicines always contain the same active substance(s) as the originator medicines.

Generally excipients do not pose any risks. However, be cautious if you are allergic or aware of incompatibilities to any of the excipients such as aspartame, oil extracts or sugars (especially in liquid formulations) amongst others. All excipients and related warnings are listed in the patient information leaflet.

Generic medicines often look different but they have the same efficacy and quality.



#### 7. What to do when I experience an adverse reaction while taking my generic medicine?

Just like originator medicines, generic medicines may have side effects.

Contact your doctor and/or pharmacist if you experience any adverse drug reaction (ADR).

#### Reporting Side Effects

The Malta Medicines Authority collects and processes ADR reports. Patients are encouraged to report suspected ADRs by accessing:

<http://www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/adrportal>

