



# HOW TO: LOWER YOUR PRESCRIPTION COSTS

Whether you pay for your insurance, or it is provided by your company or the government (Medicare, Medicaid), you are probably looking to lower the cost of your prescriptions. For many, this cost may be your biggest health care expense.

Assuming that your average co-pay is around \$10+, this can add up quickly if you are on one or more medications per month. Also, the list of medicines covered by your plan probably continues to shrink and, as such, your out-of-pocket expenses are increasing. You may also have to reach a high deductible before your prescriptions are even covered.

Here are a few ways to help reduce the cost of your medicines.

## **TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT LESS EXPENSIVE OPTIONS**

- Is there a medication alternative?
- Can I get a generic version?
- Is it possible to get a 90-day prescription?
- Can I get samples or coupons?
- Will you double the size of the dosage? (Note that you'll then split the pills.)
- Review your list of medications, to confirm you're only taking what you need and using them properly.
- Is there an effective over-the-counter alternative?

## **RE-EVALUATE YOUR HEALTH PLAN**

- Consider a higher cost plan that provides more comprehensive prescription coverage, to lower your annual out-of-pocket prescription costs.
- Contact your health plan or your company's HR department for help with your evaluation.

## **USE A PRESCRIPTION DISCOUNT CARD**

- Great way to save money—no prescriptions are excluded from possible savings.
- Check out a few cards because not all of them are the same.
- Ask your pharmacist to keep the codes on file, along with the codes for your health insurance. Take a picture of your card and save it on your phone just in case it is not on file.
- Contact your health plan administrator if you have a deductible—discounted pricing may not count.



#### **USE RX PRICE LOOK UP TOOL**

- Many times, the discounted price using a prescription discount card is lower than your co-pay. Before you fill a prescription, use a drug price look up tool to determine which is cheaper: [www.rxpricesavings.com](http://www.rxpricesavings.com).
- Based on supply and demand, prescription prices are frequently changing.
- The cost for the same prescription can vary a lot from pharmacy to pharmacy.

#### **BUY ONLINE**

- Medicine is often less expensive online.
- Beware of fake online pharmacies. Go to [www.fda.gov/besafex](http://www.fda.gov/besafex) to check if an online store is legitimate; also look for the NABP VIPPS seal.
- Google your drug's name plus "discounts" to see if any online coupons, discounts and rebate offers are available.
- The downside to buying online is that you can't talk to the pharmacist about side effects, drug-drug interactions, etc.

#### **GET PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE**

- Go to Partnership for Prescription Assistance ([www.pparx.com](http://www.pparx.com)) for info on available free or reduced-cost medicine programs.

#### **BUY PRESCRIPTIONS TAX FREE**

- Start a Flexible Spending Account, which sets aside money from your paycheck pre-tax, and can be used to buy your medications.

#### **REDUCE YOUR NEED FOR MEDICATIONS**

- Improve your eating habits and exercise program to help reduce your need for medications.
- Get regular medical checkups and follow the advice of your health care professional.