

Good advice for those using medicines:

- Learn the name of the active ingredient in your medicine. If you are unsure of what the name of the active ingredient is, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Do not remove the label from the packaging. The label often indicates which medicine your doctor prescribed, the equivalent medicine you received and the name of the active ingredient.
- Always inform your doctor of any allergies you may have. The doctor will decide if a change of medicine is appropriate.
- Ask a pharmacist, or your doctor, if you are unsure of how to use your medicines.

More questions about your medicines or generic substitution?

Ask your pharmacist or your doctor

Contact a pharmacist or your doctor. They are very knowledgeable about medicines, the high-cost threshold system and your prescriptions.

Call Public Medicines Information

0771-46 70 10

Public Medicines Information is part of the Medical Products Agency and can answer any general questions you have about your medicines.

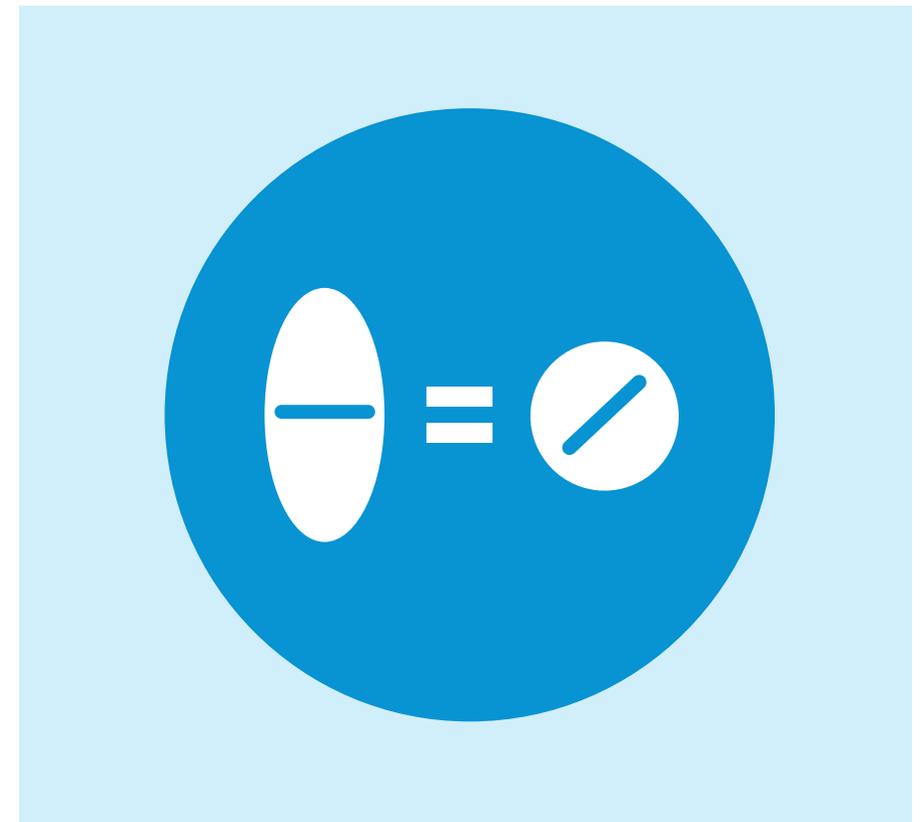
Read more on the Medical Products Agency website

www.lakemedelsverket.se/utbyte

The Medical Products Agency website contains general information about medicines.

A safe substitution at the pharmacy – the equivalent medicine at the lowest price

When you collect your prescription medicine at a pharmacy you are often offered an equivalent medicine at a lower price. This is called generic substitution.



Why are medicines substituted?

Medicines are substituted so that neither you nor society as a whole is forced to pay more for them than is necessary.

When a pharmaceutical company develops a new medicine, known as a brand name medicine, that company has the sole right to produce and market it for a specific period of time. After this period, other companies may produce equivalent medicines containing the same active ingredient, generic medicines, and prices drop due to the resulting competition.

Pharmacies are obliged to offer the equivalent medicine with the lowest price. If we paid the same price now as we did when the medicines lacked generic competition, the cost would be SEK 8 billion higher each year. This is equal to the annual cost of running almost 300 community health centres.

Why can equivalent medicines look different?

In addition to active ingredients, medicines also contain excipients that give them their colour, form and taste. Equivalent medicines contain the same active ingredient in the same amount, but the excipients may vary, which may make them look different.

The same active substance and medicinal effect...



... but a different name, appearance and price

Are equivalent medicines equally effective?

Yes; equivalent medicines contain the same dose of the same active ingredient, have the same medicinal effect and work the same in the body. Therefore, they may be substituted for one another.

Are equivalent medicines equally safe?

Yes; equivalent medicines are equally safe, regardless of price. All medicines are tested and approved by government agencies before they go on sale. Generic medicines are subject to the same stringent quality requirements as brand name medicines and work the same way in the body.

All medicines can cause adverse effects, side effects, which are usually caused by the active ingredient. Even though the medicines are equivalent, their side effects may be described differently in the patient information leaflet included in the package. Contact your doctor or pharmacist if you experience new side effects from your medicine, or a change in its effect.

Your medicine, your decision

You decide if your medicine will be substituted, but your choice affects the price you pay. The pharmacy offers the medicine that has the lowest price. Which medicine this is can vary between visits to the pharmacy. You have to pay the full price of any medicines not covered by the high-cost threshold system.

The table below contains some common examples of equivalent medicine substitutions. Medicine A is written on your prescription, but Medicine B has the lowest price. Both Medicines A and B are covered by the high-cost threshold system.

| At the pharmacy | Your cost |
|--|--|
| The pharmacy offers you Medicine B and you choose Medicine B. | The whole cost of Medicine B is covered by the high-cost threshold system. |
| The pharmacy offers you Medicine B, but you want Medicine A, which is written in your prescription. | You must pay the price difference between A and B, the rest is covered by the high-cost threshold system. |
| You doctor has decided that your medicine is not to be substituted. | The pharmacy gives you Medicine A. The entire cost of Medicine A is covered by the high-cost threshold system. |
| The pharmacy offers you Medicine B. However, you do not want this medicine. Nor do you want Medicine A, but another medicine that is equivalent and substitutable. | This cost is not covered by the high-cost threshold system. You must pay the full price of the medicine. |

