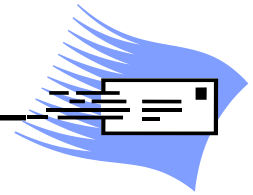




ManateeChoice Health Plan

Fast Facts



FAST FACTS is published by the Manatee Health Network (MHN) to provide Members with the opportunity to better understand medical conditions, various treatment options, and the impact of these options on member costs. **FAST FACTS** should be used in addition to the advice of your physicians, pharmacists, & other healthcare professionals.

Antidepressants: How to save money on your medication

Choosing an Antidepressant

There are many different antidepressants available with slight differences in their actions and side effects. Your doctor may consider the following factors when prescribing the right antidepressant for you:

- **Your particular symptoms.** Symptoms of depression can vary, and one antidepressant may relieve certain symptoms better than another.
- **Possible side effects.** Side effects of antidepressants vary from one medication to another and from person to person. Bothersome side effects can make it difficult to stick with treatment. Sexual side effects are a particularly common reason people stop taking an antidepressant.
- **Interaction with other medications.** Some antidepressants can cause dangerous reactions when taken with other medications.
- **Your other health conditions.** Some antidepressants may cause problems if you have certain mental or physical health conditions. On the other hand, certain antidepressants may help treat other physical or mental health conditions along with depression.
- **Cost and health insurance coverage.** Some antidepressants can be very expensive, but some generics are available.

Common Types of Antidepressants

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)

- Citalopram (Celexa)
Escitalopram (Lexapro)
Sertraline (Zoloft)
Fluoxetine (Prozac)
Paroxetine (Paxil)
- Many doctors start depression treatment by prescribing an SSRI. However, they can cause sexual side effects.

Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs)

- Venlafaxine (Effexor, Effexor XR)
Desvenlafaxine (Pristiq)
Duloxetine (Cymbalta)
- May work for some people when other antidepressants haven't. They can cause side effects similar to those caused by SSRIs.

The active ingredient in Lexapro is also available in Celexa. Many people find the same benefits using Celexa, which is available as a generic.

Citalopram (Celexa) **Escitalopram** (Lexapro)

In the body, Effexor turns into the same active ingredient available in Pristiq. Many people find the same benefits in Effexor, available as a generic.

Venlafaxine (Effexor) **Desvenlafaxine** (Pristiq)

Ways to Save

- Generic medications are **\$0 copay** for Manatee members at preferred network pharmacies.
- If you and your doctor decide that one of these generic prescription medications is right for you, you can save \$23 or more each month, totaling up to **\$480 per year in savings!**
- Check out the following chart to see your potential savings:

	MHN Preferred Pharmacy (Costs per Month)	Non-Preferred Pharmacy (Costs per Month)
Cost of Generic Effexor or Generic Celexa	\$0 No cost to member	\$5
Cost of Brand Pristiq	20% of the drug cost (Approximately \$23)	25% of the drug cost (Approximately \$28)
Cost of Brand Lexapro	40% of the drug cost (Approximately \$36)	50% of the drug cost (Approximately \$45)
If you use Pristiq instead of generic Effexor, it will cost you an extra...	\$276 (\$23 x 12 months) <u>-\$0 (\$0 x 12 months)</u> =\$276 per year	\$336 (\$28 x 12 months) <u>-\$60 (\$5 x 12 months)</u> =\$276 per year
If you use Lexapro instead of generic Celexa, it will cost you an extra...	\$432 (\$36 x 12 months) <u>-\$0 (\$0 x 12 months)</u> =\$432 per year	\$540 (\$45 x 12 months) <u>-\$60 (\$5 x 12 months)</u> =\$480 per year

Only your doctor can decide which medication is right for you. If you and your doctor decide to try a different medication, your doctor just needs to write (or call-in) a prescription for one of these products.

There are steps you can take to get the best results from your medication:

- Give the medication some time to work—it can take up to 4 to 6 weeks of taking a medication before you feel its effects
- Take your antidepressant as prescribed—right dose, right time, and right way
- Don't stop taking an antidepressant without talking to your doctor first
- Many people find that taking an antidepressant and talking with an expert, such as a psychologist or a behavioral health professional, can help—contact Manatee's LAMP program at 741-2995 for more information and assistance

Manatee Health Disclaimer

The information in this newsletter is not a substitute for medical advice. It is for reference only and should not be used to determine treatment for your specific medical conditions—only a health care provider can do this. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult your physician regarding the use of over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or consult your physician regarding the use of prescription or over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or before starting any new diet, fitness, or supplement regimen.

Prescription Benefit Manager:
Prescription Solutions, Inc.
For: Manatee Health Network
Bradenton, Florida

Prepared by:
Pharmacy Healthcare Solutions, Inc.
P.O. Box 101632
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Editor: Melissa Sherer Krause, Pharm.D.
Contributor: Christopher K. Williams, Pharm. D.
Pharmacy Advocate
Ashley Gibbons

Published April 2010