

Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions®

An Independent Health  company

PHARMACY BENEFITS NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1

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At PBD, we want to thank you for entrusting us to manage your prescription benefits. As a symbol of our continued growth and expertise in pharmacy benefit management, we have updated our brand with a new dynamic look and feel!

We look forward to serving you in 2014 and beyond.

Make sure your medication is working for you

Taking your medication properly is one way to decrease your health care costs. Every year, thousands of people end up in the hospital, fail to get better, and spend more money than they have to because they didn't take their medication properly.

To help make sure your medications accomplish what they are intended to do, here are a few steps you should take:

- Always follow the directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist. You should know how often you need to take your medication, what the proper dosage is and what side effects to expect from your medications. Call your doctor if you experience unexpected or troubling side effects.
- Never change the way you take a medication without first discussing it with your doctor. A medication will provide little benefit if you skip

doses or you abruptly stop taking it because you feel better.

- Know whether your medication should be taken with a meal or on an empty stomach. What you eat or drink can make a medication more or less powerful.
- Be sure to store medications properly in a dark, cool, and dry location. Don't keep them in the bathroom medicine cabinet as the humidity in the bathroom can alter a medication's effectiveness.
- Check the expiration date on over-the-counter medications. If it has expired, be sure to discard any unused tablets or pills.

Also, don't forget to fill your prescriptions ahead of time to avoid missing a dose. You may want to order refills one week in advance in case there are problems in getting the medications.

It's important to always carry your member ID card

Your Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions Member ID Card is an important part of receiving the care you need, when you need it. That is why it is essential to always carry your member ID card with you and show it when you're visiting your pharmacy. Make sure other family members on your plan carry their member ID cards, too.

Many pharmacies offer low-cost generic drugs, often times at a price lower than a member's copayment. Since Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions requires pharmacies to accept the lower of a member's copayment or the Usual and Customary Retail (UCR) price, members will automatically pay the lower costs that the pharmacies are charging.

For example, a member with a \$7.00 Tier 1 copayment would pay \$7.00 for all Tier 1 drugs that have a retail price of \$7.00 or higher. However, if

the price has dropped to \$4.00 for the same generic drug, the member would only be charged \$4.00.

Therefore, by presenting the pharmacist with your current Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions Member ID Card, it will ensure that all of your prescription claims are billed correctly. In addition, it will also help pharmacy verify that it has your current information on file just in case any of your benefits have changed since the last time you had a prescription filled.

If you have misplaced your ID card or if you need additional cards, please call the Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions Member Services Department at **(716) 635-7880** or **1-888-878-9172**. TTY users may call **1-800-432-1110**.

Please direct questions or comments you have about the Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions newsletter to:

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What you need to know about “me-too” drugs

Many of the new drugs that are coming into the marketplace are now known as “me-too” drugs. These drugs are similar to those already available in the marketplace, but they are slightly different than the current drug to qualify as a new drug. These changes can include different strengths, method of distribution (e.g., tablets versus caplets), and tint or color changes.

Creating a “me-too” drug is less costly for a drug manufacturer as the original drug has already been developed, tested and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The drug manufacturers are able to reformulate the new drug without having to go through the expensive initial phases of development.

Adverse effects for most of the new drugs on the market can be unknown for several years. Even small changes in the “me-too” drugs can result in unexpected adverse effects. Many health care providers choose to wait before prescribing a new drug if there are already medications on the market that do the same thing and have established clinical efficacy and safety.

Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions offers a drug formulary from which health care providers can prescribe for their patients. Drugs on the formulary have been reviewed by our Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee for safety, efficacy and cost. When prescribing a drug to treat your condition, your health care provider can reference the formulary for a list of the drugs that are covered for you. A copy of the Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions Drug Formulary can be found at www.pbdrx.com.

Only your health care provider can determine which drug is right for you. If you have any questions about the drugs you are taking or new drugs on the market to treat your condition, we encourage you to speak with your health care provider.

New generic medications will soon be available

Generic medications are safe and effective alternatives to brand-name drugs. They typically are less expensive than brand-name drugs, and the savings can be significant. For your reference, here are some brand name medications that recently have had a new generic alternative released to the marketplace:

Brand Name Drug	Generic Name	Category
Aricept® 23mg	donepezil 23mg	Alzheimer's
Atacand®	candesartan	Cardiovascular
Atacand® HCT	candesartan/hctz	Cardiovascular
Campral®	acamprosate dr	Addiction
Dilantin®	phenytoin chewable tablets	Anticonvulsants
Duetact®	pioglitazone/glimepiride	Diabetes
Lamictal® ODT	lamotrigine odt	Anticonvulsants
Luvox® CR	fluvoxamine	Mental Health
Opana® ER	oxymorphone er	Pain
Pulmicort® Respules 0.25mg, 0.5mg	budesonide respules 0.25mg, 0.5mg	Asthma/Respiratory
Revatio®	sildenafil	Cardiovascular
Rilutek®	riluzole	Muscle Relaxants
Soriatane®	acitretin	Dermatology
Suboxone®	buprenorphine/naloxone sublingual	Addiction
Temodar®	temozolomide	Cancer
Zomig®	zolmitriptan	Pain
Zovirax®	acyclovir ointment	Dermatology

Please note: Not all drugs are covered by all pharmacy benefit plans. Copayments, tier placement and certain restrictions vary by plan.

**We're here
to help**

Independent Health's Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions has a special unit dedicated to servicing our PBM members. If you have any questions regarding any of your pharmacy benefit claims, please contact our Member Services Department at (716) 635-7880 or 1-888-878-9172, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 8 pm E.S.T.