



“Discount” Drug Card Plan: A Price Comparison

Drug	Strength	Price Per 30 Day Supply				
		VA	Canada	Drugstore.com	“Discount” Cards (lowest price)	“Discount”? <small>Difference between lowest card price and VA price</small>
Lipitor	10 mg	\$40.55	\$35.42	\$62.99	\$67.07	(\$26.52)
Plavix	75 mg	\$99.67	\$53.13	\$114.99	\$114.38	(\$14.71)
Fosamax	70 mg	\$42.96	\$28.02	\$64.99	\$62.95	(\$19.99)
Norvasc	5 mg	\$25.38	\$28.34	\$42.99	\$42.82	(\$17.44)
Celebrex	200 mg	\$62.60	\$27.67	\$76.99	\$80.42	(\$17.82)
Zocor	20 mg	\$69.27	\$48.70	\$123.99	\$101.92	(\$32.65)
Prevacid	30 mg	\$70.85	\$44.27	\$120.99	\$111.63	(\$40.78)
Protonix	40 mg	\$26.83	\$42.06	\$98.99	\$87.49	(\$60.66)
Lipitor	20 mg	\$60.74	\$44.27	\$94.99	\$96.42	(\$35.68)
Norvasc	10 mg	\$38.89	\$42.06	\$60.99	\$59.08	(\$20.19)

Notes

Drugs: This list is the ten drugs most frequently prescribed to seniors in 2003, in order, based on claims volume from Pennsylvania's senior prescription drug program, PACE, the largest outpatient prescription drug program for seniors in the country.

VA Prices: VA prices are prices for the Federal Supply Schedule and reflect what the Department of Veterans Affairs pays for these drugs. The prices were current as of April 26, 2004 and were collected from the Pharmacy Benefits Management Strategic Health Care Group in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Prices are calculated based on the number of units available through the Federal Supply Schedule that most closely matches the number of units shown in the table.

Canadian Prices: Prices are for Ontario and reflect the amount the Ministry of Health will reimburse. The information is from the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary/Comparative Drug Index, Edition 38, Update C, April 6, 2004. In Canada, Protonix is marketed as Pantoloc.

Currency Conversion: Canadian currency conversion from XE.com, mid-market rates 4-22. \$1 CAD = \$.737911 USD

Drugstore.com prices: Prices for Drugstore.com were collected on April 19 to capture prices available prior to the Medicare discount card. Drugstore.com is an internet prescription drug vendor; its prices are available nationally.

Medicare Discount Card Prices: Prices reflect the lowest prices listed for participating Medicare drug discount cards offered in 10 zip codes representing a diverse combination of rural and urban areas (Cincinnati; Detroit; Las Vegas; Los Angeles; Miami; New York; Olin, Iowa; Pittsburgh; Santa Fe; and Seattle). For urban areas, zip codes were searched for pharmacies in a 3-mile radius. For rural areas, the search was for a 15 mile radius. This corresponds to access requirements for prescription drug plans under the Medicare drug benefit. Prices are those posted April 29 on Medicare.gov.

“Discount”?: The price paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs for each of the listed drugs is lower than the lowest price available to seniors and people with disabilities using a “discount” drug card. This column reflects the lost savings, or lack of a discount, to drug card users. The lost savings is reflected by the difference between the price paid by the VA and the lowest prices available to card users.

Acknowledgements: This chart is based on a similar chart prepared by Families USA, “Price Comparison: The Department of Veterans Affairs, Canada, Drugstore.com and the Medicare Discount Card.”