

# Reducing the Burden of Drug Costs on Patients



Identifying struggling patients and providing cost-cutting strategies

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# Disclosure

- Funded by American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation
- Performed in conjunction with a national non-profit Costs of Care

# Goals & Objectives

- To highlight how to reduce patients out of pocket burden for prescription drugs
- By end:
  - Screen patients for cost-related underuse of medications
  - Offer broad strategies to reduce prescription drug costs for patients

# Burden of Drug Costs on Patients

- Patients face rising out-of-pocket drug costs<sup>1</sup>
- Medication underuse due to cost is prevalent<sup>2</sup>, resulting in poor disease management and costly complications<sup>3</sup>
- Patients are willing to disregard medical advice to lower costs<sup>4</sup>

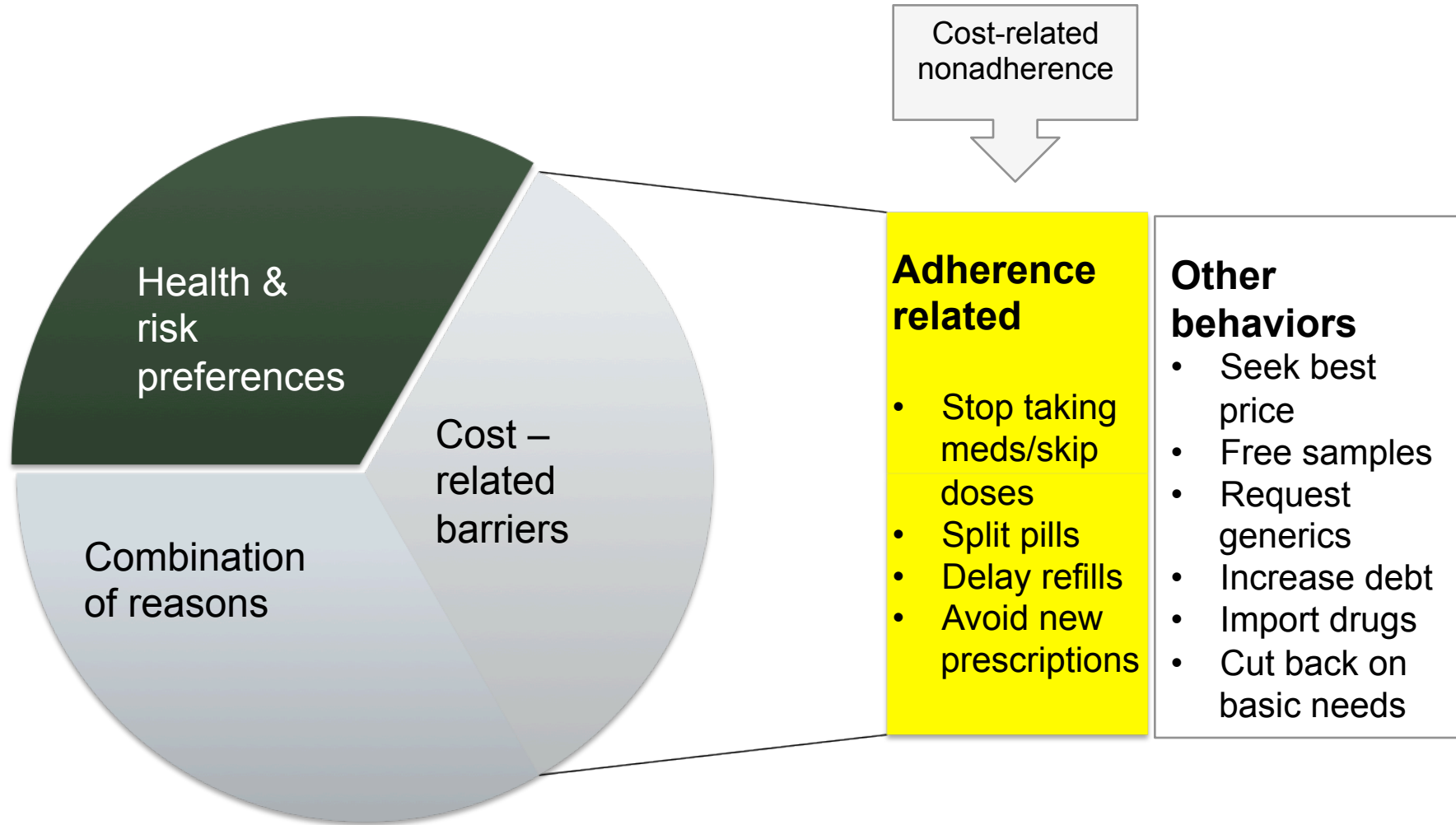


# Video

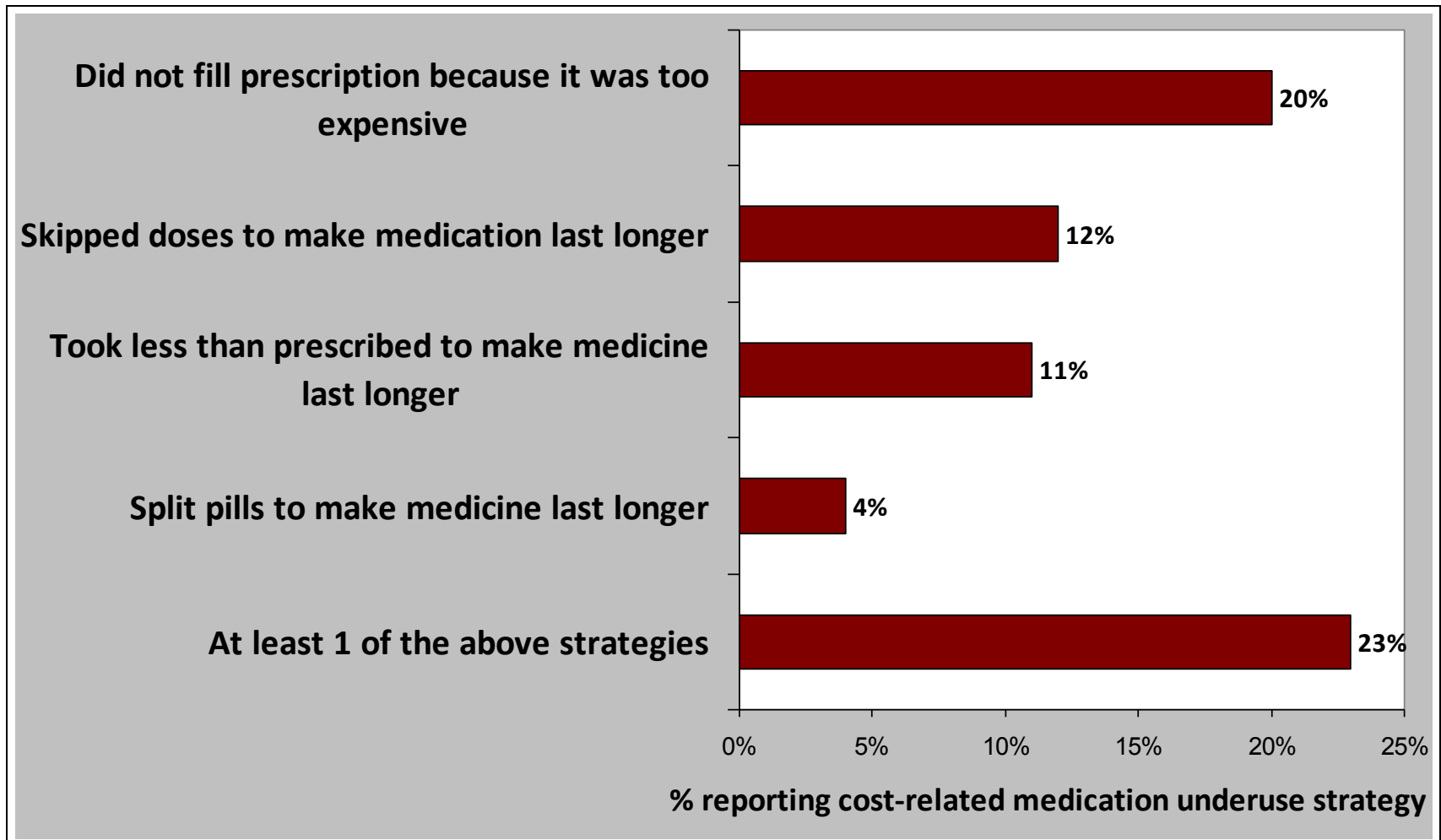
# Video Debrief

- Could this happen?
- What was the major problem?
- How was the patient affected?
- How could this have been prevented?

# Conceptual Model: Cost-Related Nonadherence



# Cost-related medication underuse: Prevalence among hospitalized managed care patients





# Does Talking with Doctors Matter?

Significant Multivariable Correlates of Switching to Another Medication that Would Cost Less (Odds Ratios [*P* Values])

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Odds ratio (95% CI)</b>	<b><i>P</i> value</b>
2 or more chronic conditions	1.66 (1.40–1.98)	<0.001
2 or more prescription medications	1.44 (1.13–1.83)	
Number of types of cost related nonadherence		
None	Reference	–
1	1.38 (1.11–1.70)	0.004
2	1.48 (1.14–1.93)	0.004
3	2.05 (1.57–2.67)	<0.001
Discussion about cost (1 = yes, 0 = no)	5.04 (4.28–5.93)	<0.001

# Role of Physicians

- Physicians are unaware of how much prescription drugs cost to patients<sup>5</sup>
- Patients and physicians agree that more discussion of patients' out-of-pocket costs is necessary<sup>1</sup>
- Patients wish to be educated on the cost and quality of treatment options<sup>4</sup>



# Role of Physicians



Physicians must learn how to:

1. Screen to identify patients who are having difficulty paying for medication
2. Counsel these patients on strategies to reduce drug costs

# Screening about Cost Burden

- While taking the medication history, ask patients:



(1) “Do your medications cost too much?”

(2) “Have you ever **cut back** on medications because of cost?”<sup>3</sup>

(3) “Have you ever cut back on **other things (ex: food, leisure)** due to high medication costs?”

# COST-SAVING STRATEGIES: GOT MeDS?



**G**enerics

**O**rdering in bulk

**T**herapeutic alternatives

**M**edication Review

**D**iscount drugs

**S**plitting pills

**?**



# Generics

- After patent protection expires, drug companies can compete to produce a drug which drives down price
- Must be 'biochemical equivalence' (80%)
- Reluctance to prescribe generics
- Pharmaceutical marketing also has an impact
- Free samples -> brand name drug continued even after patient doesn't have samples



# Generics

- When prescribing, be aware of which drugs are available as generics
- Case: Patient who is self-pay needs medication for hyperlipidemia
  - Where would you go to find the ‘best buy’ ?
- Educate patients on safety and therapeutic equivalence of generic vs. brand name drugs



# Generics

<http://www.consumerreports.org/health/best-buy-drugs/index.htm>

## The Best Statin at the Best Price

*Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* are in **blue** and **bold black**. We recommend these drugs because they are effective, generally safe, and cost less. Work with your doctor to choose the best statin and dose for you.

- If you need to lower your LDL cholesterol less than 30%, look at the drugs listed in blue.
- If you need to lower your LDL cholesterol more than 30%, look at the drugs listed in bold black.

Generic Name and Dose	Brand Name <sup>1</sup>	Average Cost Per Month <sup>2</sup>	% of LDL Cholesterol Lowered	Reduces Heart Attack Risk <sup>3</sup>
Atorvastatin 10 mg	Generic	\$114	34-38%	Yes
Atorvastatin 20 mg	Generic	\$155	42-46%	Yes
<b>Atorvastatin 40 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$160</b>	<b>47-51%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Atorvastatin 80 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$164</b>	<b>46-54%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Atorvastatin 10 mg	Lipitor	\$130	34-38%	Yes
Atorvastatin 20 mg	Lipitor	\$178	42-46%	Yes
Atorvastatin 40 mg	Lipitor	\$191	47-51%	Yes
Atorvastatin 80 mg	Lipitor	\$199	46-54%	Yes
Fluvastatin 20 mg	Lescol	\$135	22%	Likely
Fluvastatin 40 mg	Lescol	\$132	25%	Likely
Fluvastatin sustained release 80 mg	Lescol XL	\$172	35%	Likely
<b>Lovastatin 10 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$12</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Lovastatin 20 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$16</b>	<b>24-27%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Lovastatin 40 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$51</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Lovastatin 80 mg	Generic	\$103	39-48%	Yes
Lovastatin sustained release 20 mg	Altoprev	\$409	30%	Unknown

Generic Name and Dose	Brand Name <sup>1</sup>	Average Cost Per Month <sup>2</sup>	% of LDL Cholesterol Lowered	Reduces Heart Attack Risk <sup>3</sup>
<b>Pravastatin 10 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$35</b>	<b>18-25%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Pravastatin 20 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$32</b>	<b>23-29%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Pravastatin 40 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$46</b>	<b>26-34%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Pravastatin 80 mg	Generic	\$71	30-37%	Yes
Pravastatin 20 mg	Pravacol	\$142	23-29%	Yes
Pravastatin 40 mg	Pravacol	\$208	26-34%	Yes
Pravastatin 80 mg	Pravacol	\$199	30-37%	Yes
Rosuvastatin 5 mg	Crestor	\$163	39-46%	Yes
Rosuvastatin 10 mg	Crestor	\$161	43-50%	Yes
Rosuvastatin 20 mg	Crestor	\$163	52-55%	Yes
Rosuvastatin 40 mg	Crestor	\$161	55-60%	Yes
Simvastatin 10 mg	Generic	\$38	26-33%	Yes
<b>Simvastatin 20 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$68</b>	<b>30-40%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Simvastatin 40 mg Generic</b>		<b>\$68</b>	<b>35-45%</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Simvastatin 80 mg	Generic	\$59	40-50%	Yes
Simvastatin 10 mg	Zocor	\$120	26-33%	Yes
Simvastatin 20 mg	Zocor	\$191	30-40%	Yes
Simvastatin 40 mg	Zocor	\$198	35-45%	Yes



# Ordering in Bulk

- Suggest that patients order 3-month supplies of medications from pharmacy or by mail-order
  - Reduced price for bulk purchase
  - Patient pays co-pay less often
  - Supply of drug lasts longer



# Therapeutic Alternatives


- OTC drugs
  - May be cheaper than generic or brand-name Rx drugs (depending on patient's insurance)
  - Aspirin (OTC) vs brand name
- Cheaper or generically available drug in same class
  - Depression and blood pressure “me too” drugs
- Cheaper drug from different class for same condition
  - Pepcid vs Nexxium for GI reflux
- Resources:
  - Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs
  - AARP Drug Savings Tool
  - Eprescribe formularies






# Medication Review

[choosingwisely.org](http://choosingwisely.org)



*An initiative of the ABIM Foundation*

American Academy of Family Physicians



**Five Things Physicians and Patients Should Question**

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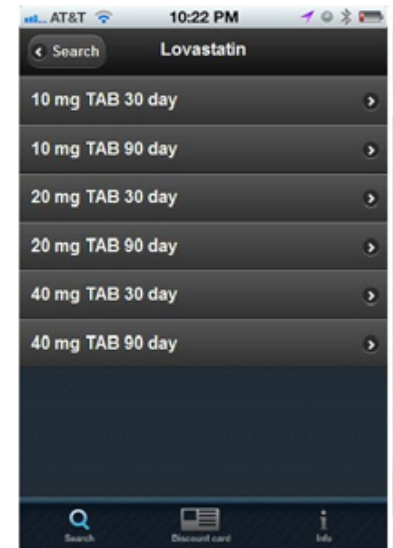
**Don't routinely prescribe antibiotics for acute mild-to-moderate sinusitis unless symptoms last for seven or more days, or symptoms worsen after initial clinical improvement.**

Symptoms must include discolored nasal secretions and facial or dental tenderness when touched. Most sinusitis in the ambulatory setting is due to a viral infection that will resolve on its own. Despite consistent recommendations to the contrary, antibiotics are prescribed in more than 80 percent of outpatient visits for acute sinusitis. Sinusitis accounts for 16 million office visits and \$5.8 billion in annual health care costs.

**Case:** A female patient who is self-pay and unemployed has painful urination and white cells in her urine. You decide to prescribe a generically available antibiotic, but she is worried about the cost at her pharmacy. How can she reduce her out of pocket cost?

# Discount Drugs

- \$4 drug lists (\$10 for 90-day supply)
  - [http://sites.target.com/site/en/spot/page.jsp?title=pharmacy\\_generic\\_drugs\\_alphabetical](http://sites.target.com/site/en/spot/page.jsp?title=pharmacy_generic_drugs_alphabetical)
  - Walmart, Target, Kroger, Giant Eagle, Ralphps, Fred Meyer; Walgreen's- discount generics
- LowestMed Mobile App
  - Compares prices between local pharmacies
- Discount Cards
  - Healthcare Blue Book, LowestMed, Epocrates
- Medication Assistance Programs
  - Needy Meds
- Formularies



LowestMed App



# 4 Dollar List



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Target : [Pharmacy](#) : **Generic Drugs**

## Transfer Prescriptions >

Get your prescriptions right where you shop.

## Refill Prescriptions >

Need more of a medication? Get a quick and easy refill.

## Set Up Auto Refill >

We'll refill your prescriptions and call you when they're ready.

## Pharmacy Rewards >

Learn how you can earn 10% off on a day of shopping with your REDcard.

## Flu Shots >

## PHARMACY

\$4 Generic Drugs

# is there a \$4 generic for my medication?

**Hundreds are available.**

Target offers a wide range of generics to help treat a variety of conditions and diseases. They're just as safe as their brand-name equivalents, but are available at a much lower cost—just \$4 for a 30-day supply, or \$10 for 90 days.

[Find a Generic that's Right for You](#)





# LesliesList.org

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Are you uninsured or underinsured?  
 Looking for low cost or free healthcare in Chicago?  
 Trying to get the most for your healthcare dollars?

LesliesList.org is your free, local resource for the uninsured and underinsured in the Chicago region. Leslie'sList.org will help you price compare to find the best and lowest price on prescription medicines and medical testing, including for MRIs, mammograms, CT scans, X-rays and PET scans.

LesliesList.org also provides a complete and up to date list of free clinics in the Chicago area and suburbs. You can search the clinic section for free and low cost clinics such as pediatric, dental, HIV, and mental health care, to name a few.

Do you know something that might help a fellow Chicagoan find low cost or free health care? If so, please share your knowledge in our [Community](#) section. There you will also find [Leslie's Blog](#), with all kinds of other information on how to get low cost healthcare in the Chicago area.

What would you like to do?



**FIND LOWER COST  
 PRESCRIPTIONS**



**FIND LOWER COST  
 TESTING**



**FIND CLINICS  
 NEAR YOU**



**SHARE INFORMATION  
 WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**

LESLIE'S B

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# Discount Drugs

- LowestMed Mobile App
  - Compares prices between local pharmacies



LowestMed App



**Prilosec OTC** Prilosec OTC

**Manufacturer/Pricing**

**Generic name**  
omeprazole

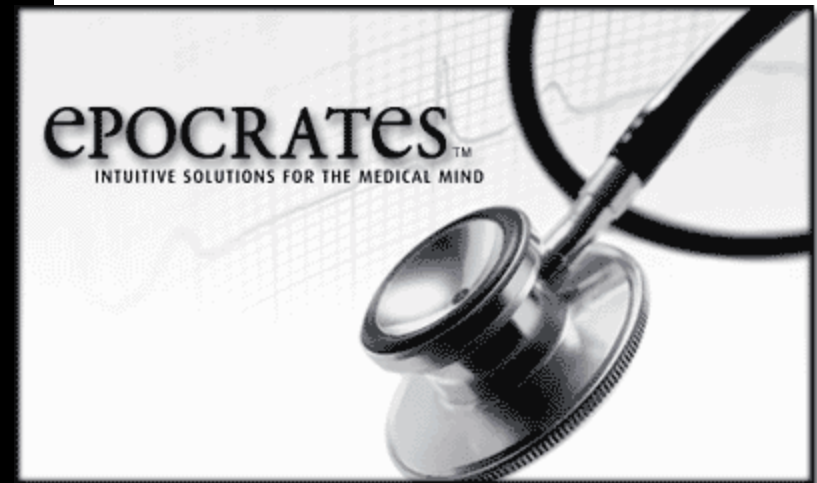
**Manufacturer**  
Procter & Gamble

**DEA/FDA**  
OTC: Available over-the-counter without prescription

**Approximate Retail Price**  
from [www.drugstore.com](http://www.drugstore.com)  
[tablet, enteric coated]  
20 mg (1 box, 14 ea): \$19.99

**Home** Interactions Pill ID Tools More

# Point of Care Medication Guides



# Splitting Pills

- Sometimes, higher dose tablets can be split
  - are often priced same or only slightly higher than the lower dose drug
- Pill splitter at most drugstores <\$5



Important to ensure patient understanding & physician coordination

- Demonstration



# Splitting Pills

## SOME MEDICINES THAT CAN BE SAFELY SPLIT

Amlodipine (Norvasc)  
Atenolol (Tenormin)  
Atorvastatin (Lipitor)  
Citalopram (Celexa)  
Clonazepam (Klonopin)  
Doxazosin (Cardura)  
Finasteride (Proscar)  
Levothyroxine (Synthroid)  
Lisinopril (Zestril)  
Lovastatin (Mevacor)  
Metformin (Glucophage)  
Metoprolol (Toprol)  
Nefazodone (Serzone)  
Olanzapine (Zyprexa)  
Paroxetine (Paxil)  
Pravastatin (Pravachol)  
Quinapril (Accupril)  
Rosuvastatin (Crestor)  
Sertraline (Zoloft)  
Sildenafil (Viagra)  
Simvastatin (Zocor)  
Tadalafil (Cialis)  
Vardenafil (Levitra)

From Consumer Reports  
Best Buy Drugs

Take home  
point:

Not all pills  
can be split

Important to  
look up

## Screening for Cost Burden

When taking medication hx, ask patients:

1	“Do your medications <b>cost too much?</b> ”
2	“Have you ever <b>cut back</b> on medications because of cost?”
3	“Have you ever cut back on <b>other things (e.g. food, leisure)</b> due to high drug costs?”

## Cost-Saving Strategies: **GOT MeDS?**

<b>G</b>	<b>Generics:</b> prescribe when possible; educate patients on safety/efficacy
<b>O</b>	<b>Ordering in bulk:</b> 3-month supplies of drugs from pharmacy or by mail
<b>T</b>	<b>Therapeutic alternatives:</b> OTC meds; cheaper meds in same class
<b>M e</b>	<b>Medication review:</b> regularly review med list; remove unnecessary meds
<b>D</b>	<b>Discount drugs:</b> \$4 drugs (Walmart, Target, etc.); discount cards
<b>S</b>	<b>Splitting pills:</b> prescribe higher dose and advise patients to split pills

### RESOURCES

Online: [Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs](#), [AARP Drug Savings Tool](#)

Mobile Apps: [Generics](#), [LowestMed](#), [iPharmacy](#), [Epocrates RX](#)

# Case

- You see a 62 yo male patient in urgent care who was recently discharged from the hospital for a heart attack after he got a cardiac stent.
- On discharge, he was started on Aspirin, Atorvastatin 40 mg daily, Coreg 25mg BID, Enalapril 10 mg daily, and Plavix 75mg for one year.

# Course Continued

- He was discharged to cardiac rehabilitation.
- While there, he reported depression and was started on Cymbalta 30 mg daily.
- He was then sent home.
- When he went to fill his prescriptions, the pharmacist charged him \$730 dollars.

# Now...

- His current insurance does not include a pharmacy benefit.
- He is looking for ways to cut his medication costs and asks you for your advice.

Drug	Cost (Walgreens)	SOLUTION
Atorvastatin 40 mg daily	\$151.17	
<b>Coreg 25 mg twice a day</b>	\$149.47	
Enalapril 10mg daily	\$14.00	
<b>Plavix 75mg daily</b>	\$216.25	Not much
Aspirin 325 mg daily (Bayer OTC)	\$11.99	
<b>Cymbalta 30mg daily</b>	\$186.74	
TOTAL	\$729.62	



Drug	Cost (Walgreens)	SOLUTION
Atorvastatin 40 mg daily	\$151.17	
<b>Coreg 25 mg twice a day</b>	\$149.47	Change to generic (4\$)
Enalapril 10mg daily	\$14.00	
Plavix 75mg daily	\$216.25	Not much
Aspirin 325 mg daily (Bayer OTC)	\$11.99	
<b>Cymbalta 30mg daily</b>	\$186.74	Opt for discount SSRI (i.e. fluoxetine) (\$4)
TOTAL	\$729.62	

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Plavix 75mg daily	\$216.25	Not much
<b>Aspirin 325 mg daily (Bayer OTC)</b>	\$11.99	Over the counter Walgreens (\$2)
Cymbalta 30mg daily	\$186.74	Opt for discount SSRI (i.e. fluoxetine) (\$4)
TOTAL	\$729.62	

Drug	Cost (Walgreens)	SOLUTION
<b>Atorvastatin 40 mg daily</b>	\$151.17	
Coreg 25 mg twice a day	\$149.47	Change to generic (4\$)
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Plavix 75mg daily	\$216.25	Not much
Aspirin 325 mg daily (Bayer OTC)	\$11.99	Over the counter Walgreens (\$2)
Cymbalta 30mg daily	\$186.74	Opt for discount SSRI (i.e. fluoxetine) (\$4)
TOTAL	\$729.62	

Drug	Cost (Walgreens)	SOLUTION
<b>Atorvastatin 40 mg daily</b>	\$151.17	Pill split by purchasing 80 (\$75.59)
Coreg 25 mg twice a day	\$149.47	Change to generic (4\$)
Enalapril 10mg daily	\$14.00	Discount (4\$)
Plavix 75mg daily	\$216.25	Not much
Aspirin 325 mg daily (Bayer OTC)	\$11.99	Over the counter Walgreens (\$2)
Cymbalta 30mg daily	\$186.74	Opt for discount SSRI (i.e. fluoxetine) (\$4)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$729.62</b>	<b>\$306.25 (60% cheaper)</b>

# Summery


- Screen patients for cost-related medication underuse
- Suggests strategies that may help
- Use resources to help (Consumer Reports, LowestMeds App)

# Want to learn more?

- Visit <http://Teachingvalue.org/takecharge>



## Take Charge And Transform The American Healthcare System

 Tweet 1

[Join us and help make change \(registration is free!\)](#)

[Join the community](#)

TeachingValue.org, let's deflate medical bills.

Share  More info

It's time to take charge of healthcare costs.  
Register for the Teaching Value Project at  
[www.TeachingValue.org/TakeCharge](http://www.TeachingValue.org/TakeCharge)

*If your browser does not support the video tag. You can download this video [here](#).*

### Who should register?

Healthcare trainees, professionals, and patients who want to help reshape the American Healthcare System by learning the skills we need to deflate medical bills and protect patients' wallets.

### What will you learn?

Everyone who successfully completes the Teaching Value modules will receive a Costs of Care certificate, demonstrating your ability to:

- Articulate the major reasons why healthcare costs are rising
- Understand reasons physicians commonly overuse tests
- Strategies to reduce over-testing
- Advise patients on methods to reduce the costs of their prescription drugs

### About us

The Costs of Care Teaching Value Project is an initiative of Costs of Care that is funded by the ABIM Foundation. Increasingly, physicians, nurses and other caregivers are being called upon to improve the value of the care they are providing and to consider how their decisions impact what patients pay. Unfortunately, they often do not have the skills, training, or support to do so.

The Teaching Value Project team are a group of medical educators who believe it is time to change this. We are dedicated to transforming the American healthcare system by empowering cost-conscious caregivers to deflate medical bills and protect patients' wallets.

[Read more about the project](#)

# Acknowledgements

## Curriculum

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## Video

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- Mark Saathoff
- Auggie Kimble
- Megan Prochaska MD
- Lisa Spampanito



# Reducing the Burden of Drug Costs on Patients

## Pre-Test

For each statement below, please mark your level of agreement:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I believe that it is important for physicians to discuss out-of-pocket drug costs with patients.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Patients expect physicians to discuss out-of-pocket costs with them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	High medication costs are associated with decreased patient adherence to medication schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I feel confident identifying patients who are having problems paying for medication.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I feel confident counseling patients on strategies to save money on medications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	I know where to look to find out which medications are available as generics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I know where to look to find the most cost-effective drugs in a particular drug class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	I know where to refer patients for drugs at discounted prices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	I know where to look online for medication cost-saving resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	I know which mobile applications are useful for medication cost-saving resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# References

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<http://prescriptions.uchicago.edu>

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<http://choosingwisely.org>

<http://www.lowestmed.com>