

# Hepatitis B Fact Sheet

A Publication of the Hepatitis C Support Project

a series of fact sheets written by experts in the field of liver disease



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## *HBV: Tips for Lowering Prescription Drug Costs*

**PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS ARE GOING UP. DON'T BE EMBARRASSED IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD A MEDICATION. NEARLY EVERYONE HAS BEEN HIT BY RISING HEALTHCARE PRICES. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME COST-SAVING TIPS TO CONSIDER:**

- Ask your doctor if there is a cheaper version of your medication, such as a generic form.
- Inquire about free samples.
- See if you qualify for a pharmaceutical patient assistance program. For more information contact Partnership for Prescription Assistance at 1-888-477-2669 [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org) or Needy Meds [www.needymeds.com](http://www.needymeds.com).
- Shop for the best drug price, such as through Costco, wholesale, or reliable Internet-based pharmacies.
- Look for discounted drug prices, such as through your insurance plan, or AARP. Insurance pharmacy mail order plans can really cut costs.
- If it's a drug you are confident you will be taking for some time and at a steady dose, see if a 90-day supply costs less than a 30-day supply.
- Look for coupons in magazines or on drug manufacturers' websites.
- Join a discount pharmacy program. These programs offer discounted drug prices for an annual membership fee. If you are interested in this option, make sure the membership fee is reasonable and that the program carries the medications you are taking.
- Compare the price of different strengths of the drug. Ask your doctor if the pill can be prescribed at a higher dose and safely divided in half. For instance, if you are supposed to take a 5 mg dose of a medication every day, it may be cost effective to purchase a 30-day supply



## Tips for Lowering Prescription Drug Costs

- of a 10 mg dose and divide it in two. This would stretch the medication over a 60 day time period. Some pills should not be cut without first clearing this with your doctor. A word of caution – this may violate the rules of your insurance company and might not be permitted.
- For more information about Medicare programs, call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or go to [www.medicare.gov/MedicareReform](http://www.medicare.gov/MedicareReform). The Benefits Column, by Jacques Chambers, CLU at the HCV Advocate website, provides some interesting information about this program and other disability and benefits topics. [www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/living\\_w\\_hepatitis\\_C.asp](http://www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/living_w_hepatitis_C.asp).
  - Ask if there are any clinical trials in your area using the drug treatment that you need.
  - Purchasing prescription drugs in Canada, Mexico, or overseas is controversial. In some cases, this is legal and other cases it is not. The laws about this vary, depending on the medication and how it is being used. Medication from another country is not always the same or safe and not necessarily cheaper. However, sometimes it can be the same drug priced at a substantial savings.

## Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPARx):

<http://www.pparx.org>

Once you provide basic information PPARx will be able to tell you what patient assistance programs you may be eligible for.

## NeedyMeds

<http://www.needy meds.org>:

You can search the website by the name of your medicine (either generic or brand name), and it gives you instructions on how to apply, and what the income qualifications are.

## Be Sure to Check Out Our Hepatitis B Basics Factsheet

*How to Find Free or Low-Cost Hepatitis B Medications: HBV Patient Assistance Programs*  
[www.hbvadvocate.org/hepatitis/Basics/HBV\\_Basics\\_PAP.pdf](http://www.hbvadvocate.org/hepatitis/Basics/HBV_Basics_PAP.pdf).

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The information in this fact sheet is designed to help you understand and manage HBV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HBV should consult a medical practitioner for diagnosis and treatment of HBV.

For more information about hepatitis B, visit the following websites.  
**Hepatitis B Foundation: [www.hepb.org](http://www.hepb.org) • [HIVandHepatitis.com](http://HIVandHepatitis.com)**

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