



# Ask The Pharmacist

## Simple Tips To Recessionproof Your Health

by Paul Reyes, RPh

(NAPSA)—There are ways to safeguard your health care—and health—against economic downturns. Still, people often look to cut prescription costs first when trying to trim health care spending—and they often take dangerous steps to do so.



**Paul Reyes**

Sharing medications or skipping doses can be dangerous—and, unless told to do so by a doctor, taking half tablets may cause side effects or the tablets to lose potency. Instead, try the following money-saving tips:

- **Choose Generics:** Ask your doctor if there is a generic medication available to treat your condition, even if you've taken the same medication for a period of time. Generics can save up to 80 percent for each prescription.

- **Check Online:** Do some online cost-comparison shopping. Check your health plan or pharmacy plan's site. Sites such as My Rx Choices on medco.com have cost-comparison tools that show you potential savings when you choose lower-cost options such as a generic instead of a brand medication or order through the mail rather than your pharmacy. The Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs Web site ([consumerreports.org/health](http://consumerreports.org/health)) recommends the best medications based on effectiveness and cost.

- **Discount Programs:** Check for discount programs. For example, the Medco Rx Discount Program, while not an insurance program, provides enrollees an opportunity to save an average of



### A few steps can help you save on medications.

14 to 45 percent off prescription medications and receive advanced pharmacy care from specialist pharmacists.

- **Try Mail:** Check with your pharmacy program for discounts on getting medications through their mail-order service. Mail order may provide up to a three-month supply of medication, which may carry a lower co-pay than ordering three one-month supplies at a pharmacy.

- **Shop Around:** If you do not have prescription insurance, shop around. Different pharmacies may have different prices for medications.

The most important thing is to always take medications as prescribed and talk to your doctor and pharmacist to find out about other possible ways to save.

For more information, visit [www.medco.com](http://www.medco.com).

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