



Price Comparison of Commonly Prescribed
Pharmaceuticals in Alberta 2019



ALBERTA COLLEGE of
FAMILY PHYSICIANS



Price Comparison of Commonly Prescribed Pharmaceuticals in Alberta 2019

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For the PEER Team

In Canada, annual prescription medication costs over \$33 billion and are only second to overall hospital expenditures in health care spending.¹ These costs largely reflect the treatment of chronic medical conditions predominantly cared for by family physicians,² including heart disease and lipid management, hypertension, diabetes and depression.³

Among OECD nations, Canada has the third highest drug spending per capita (behind only Switzerland and the United States).⁴ In Canada, one in 12 do not fill a prescription or skip doses due to medication costs.⁵

In Alberta, trade name medications account for 33% of prescriptions but around 80% of prescription drug costs.⁶ On a national level, the 100 most expensive prescription drugs (of ~3000 available products),⁷ account for almost half of total prescription drug spending.⁸ Antivirals for treatment of hepatitis C and anti-neovascularization agents for treatment of macular degeneration contributed the most to growth in medication spending, while statins and proton pump inhibitors had significant declines in spending.¹

Canada is currently the only country with a universal health insurance system without a national pharmacare program.⁹ Adopting a national pharmacare program would save approximately \$4 billion annually in prescription drug costs.⁹

Many medications within a drug class are therapeutically interchangeable with similar anticipated clinical outcomes. Newer medications within a class are often derivatives of older products, frequently at a substantially higher cost, and often not covered under provincial drug plans. In 2015, pharmaceutical companies spent over \$500 million on journal advertisements and sales representative visits in Canada,¹⁰ with over 90% of marketing aimed at medications with little or no therapeutic gain over existing products.¹¹

Most provincial governments are implementing cost control measures for prescription medications. Alberta implemented a maximum allowable cost pricing for proton pump inhibitors, where patients are encouraged to use a covered lower cost alternative medication or personally pay the cost difference between their higher and lower cost alternative.¹² Using lower cost PPIs could save over \$200 million annually in Canada without an appreciable change in most patients' clinical outcomes.

The panCanadian Pharmaceutical Alliance has negotiated substantial price reductions for 70 of the most commonly prescribed generic medications.^{13,14} Despite this, Canadians still pay significantly more for their generic medications than other countries like New Zealand.¹⁴

Educating about medication costs may influence prescribers to choose lower cost alternative medications.¹⁵ With this in mind, we are pleased to publish our 2019 Price Comparison of Commonly Prescribed Pharmaceuticals in Alberta.

We encourage prescribers to consider costs (and medication coverage) when treating chronic medical conditions and especially when choosing between therapeutically similar medications.

In addition to considering least cost alternatives, other ways of decreasing medication costs include:

- Using combination products
- Extending long term prescriptions to at least 90 days
- Splitting medications

In this document, costs listed are primarily for the generic product (with generic name bolded) as provincial drug plans will generally only pay for the lowest cost formulation. Brand name prices (with brand name bolded) are for products still under patent protection. We also provide information on coverage by Alberta Blue Cross (BC) and Indian Affairs (IA) formularies and which products require Special Authorization (SA). Medications that are not covered (NC) are paid for entirely by your patients.

The prices, rounded to the nearest \$5, represent the entire retail cost of the prescription filled at a community pharmacy in Alberta, including markups and dispensing fee. This does not reflect what a patient would pay if covered under a drug plan, but rather the cost to an individual without coverage, or to the health system. The reported price reflects the maximum allowable dispensing fee charged under provincial regulations. Some pharmacies may charge less than that, but this tool allows for relative cost comparisons between medications in the same class or for treating the same condition.

This list is up to date as of January 25, 2019. We encourage you to contact your local pharmacist for information on medications not included that you routinely use in your practice.

Please forward any feedback, including cases where knowledge of medication cost or coverage made a difference to your patients or practice to: mkolber@ualberta.ca or tony.nickonchuk@ahs.ca.

What's New in the Document in 2019?

- Simplified antibiotic and iron categories
- Opioid Addiction Treatment section added

What's New with Medication Cost and Coverage in 2019?

- Perindopril and Varenicline are now generic
- Pregabalin: covered by Alberta Blue Cross and cheaper than gabapentin with more convenient dosing.

Top 10 Prescriptions by class: By number of active beneficiaries

	Canada	Alberta
1.	Statins	Statins
2.	Proton Pump Inhibitors	Proton Pump Inhibitors
3.	Amoxicillin	ACE Inhibitors
4.	Short-acting beta-agonist inhalers (mostly salbutamol)	Thyroid replacement
5.	Beta-blockers	Beta-blockers
6.	Calcium Channel Blockers	Calcium Channel Blockers
7.	Thyroid replacement	ARBs
8.	Selective Serotonin Receptor Antagonists	Metformin
9.	Combination Opioids (Tylenol #3, Percocet, etc.)	Topical NSAIDs
10.	Other antidepressants (venlafaxine, mirtazapine, bupropion, duloxetine)	Combination opioids

Top 5 Medication Classes by Drug Spending Dollars

	Canada	Alberta
1.	TNF - alpha inhibitors (Biologics)	TNF - alpha inhibitors (Biologics)
2.	Hepatitis C antivirals	Hepatitis C antivirals
3.	Anti-neovascularization agents	LABA/steroid combos
4.	Statins	Immunosuppressants (tacrolimus, mycophenolate, etc.)
5.	Atypical antipsychotics	Statins

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	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
CARDIOVASCULAR					
Lipid Lowering Agents					
Rosuvastatin	Crestor	10mg,20mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Simvastatin	Zocor	10mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Atorvastatin	Lipitor	10mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Ezetimibe	Ezetrol	10mg	QD	\$30	SA req'd BC, IA covered
Atorvastatin	Lipitor	20,40,80mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Pravastatin	Pravachol	20mg	QD	\$45	BC / IA covered
Evolocumab	Repatha	140mg sub-Q	q2weeks	\$1,680	SA req'd for BC and IA
Beta Blockers					
Atenolol	Tenormin	50mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Bisoprolol	Monacor	5mg,10mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Metoprolol	Lopresor	25mg,50mg	BID	\$25	BC / IA covered
Metoprolol-SR	Lopresor SR	100mg,200mg	QD	\$30,\$45	BC / IA covered
Atenolol	Tenormin	100mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Calcium Channel Blockers					
Amlodipine	Norvasc	5mg, 10mg	QD	\$25,\$30	BC / IA covered
Diltiazem-T	Tiazac	240mg	QD	\$50	BC / IA covered
Nifedipine	Adalat XL	30mg	QD	\$75	BC / IA covered
Angiotensin Converting Enzyme Inhibitors (ACEIs) (All have HCTZ combo products that are similar in price to the single entity product)					
Ramipril	Altace	5mg,10mg	QD	\$20	BC / IA covered
Lisinopril	Zestril	20mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Perindopril	Coversyl	4mg,8mg	QD	\$30,\$40	BC / IA covered
Enalapril	Vasotec	10mg	QD	\$40	BC / IA covered
Perindopril/Indapamide	Coversyl Plus	4mg/1.25mg	QD	\$65	BC / IA covered

LEGEND:

BC = Alberta Blue Cross, IA = Indian Affairs, NC = Not covered, SA = special authorization, SR = sustained release, OTC = over the counter, SQ = subcutaneous injection, SS=Social Services

Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARBs) (All have HCTZ combo products that are similar in price to the single entity product)					
Losartan	Cozaar	50mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Candesartan	Atacand	8mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Telmisartan	Micardis	80mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Valsartan	Diovan	80, 160mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Neprilysin Inhibitor/ARB Combinations					
Sacubitril/Valsartan	Entresto	97mg/103mg	BID	\$730	SA req'd for BC and IA; Prescriber restriction
ARB/Calcium Channel Blocker Combinations					
Telmisartan/Amlodipine	Twynsta	80mg/5mg	QD	\$85	BC / IA covered
Diuretics					
Chlorthalidone	Hygroton	50mg	1/4-1/2 QD	\$15	BC / IA covered
Furosemide	Lasix	20, 40 mg	QD	\$15	BC / IA covered
Hydrochlorothiazide	Hydrodiuril	12.5, 25 mg	QD	\$15	BC / IA covered
Indapamide	Lozide	2.5mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Spironolactone	Aldactone	25mg,100mg	QD	\$25,\$40	BC / IA covered
Anti-platelet					
ASA	Aspirin	81mg	QD	\$5	OTC, IA covered but NC BC
Clopidogrel	Plavix	75mg	QD	\$40	BC / IA covered
Ticagrelor	Brilinta	90mg	BID	\$320	SA req'd BC, IA covered
Anti-coagulant					
Warfarin	Coumadin	5mg	QD	\$20	BC / IA covered
Rivaroxaban	Xarelto	10, 15, 20mg	QD	\$295	SA req'd for BC and IA
Edoxaban	Lixiana	60mg	QD	\$295	NC by BC or IA
Apixaban	Eliquis	5mg	BID	\$335	SA req'd for BC and IA
Dabigatran	Pradaxa	110, 150mg	BID	\$345	SA req'd for BC and IA

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
HYPOGLYCEMIC AGENTS					
Biguanides					
Metformin	Glucophage	500mg	2 BID	\$20	BC / IA covered
Metformin SR	Glumetza SR	1000mg	2 QD	\$255	NC by BC or IA
Sulfonylureas					
Glyburide	Diabeta	5mg	BID	\$25	BC / IA covered
Gliclazide, Gliclazide MR	Diamicon/MR	80mg/30mg MR	BID, 2 QD MR	\$30	BC / IA covered
Meglitinides					
Repaglinide	Gluconorm	1mg	TID	\$35	BC / IA covered
Dipeptidylpeptidase-4 Inhibitors (DPP-4)					
Linagliptin	Trajenta	5mg	QD	\$270	SA req'd for BC and IA
Saxagliptin	Onglyza	5mg	QD	\$300	SA req'd for BC and IA
Sitagliptin	Januvia	100mg	QD	\$315	SA req'd for BC and IA
Sodium Glucose Cotransporter 2 (SGLT2) Inhibitors					
Empagliflozin	Jardiance	10mg	QD	\$275	SA req'd for BC and IA
Canagliflozin	Invokana	100mg	QD	\$285	SA req'd for BC and IA
Glucagon-like Peptide 1 Agonist (GLP-1)					
Liraglutide	Victoza	1.2mg SQ	QD	\$600	NC by BC or IA
Liraglutide	Victoza	1.8mg SQ	QD	\$900	NC by BC or IA
Insulin (Prices may vary between pharmacies, relative differences likely consistent. Max allowable price for 1500 Units of penfill insulin)					
Regular insulin	Novolin Toronto/ Humulin R	100U/mL	As dir	\$65	BC / IA covered
Long-acting insulin	Novolin NPH/ Humulin N	100U/mL	As dir	\$65	BC / IA covered
Rapid-acting insulin	Apidra	100U/mL	As dir	\$70	BC / IA covered
Rapid-acting insulin	Novorapid/Humalog	100U/mL	As dir	\$80	BC / IA covered
Basal insulin (Glargine)	Basaglar	100U/mL	As dir	\$90	BC / IA covered
Basal insulin (Glargine)	Toujeo	300U/mL	As dir	\$110	NC by BC or IA
Basal insulin (Glargine)	Lantus	100U/mL	As dir	\$115	BC / IA covered
Basal insulin (Degludec)	Tresiba	100U/mL	As dir	\$130	BC / IA covered
Basal insulin (Detemir)	Levemir	100U/mL	As dir	\$130	BC / IA covered

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
OBESITY					
Orlistat	Xenical	120mg	TID	\$510	NC by BC or IA
Liraglutide	Saxenda	3mg SQ	QD	\$1,200	NC by BC or IA
SMOKING CESSATION (Cost quoted for 12 weeks of stated dosing frequency)					
Bupropion	Wellbutrin SR	150mg	BID	\$60	BC / IA covered
Nortriptyline	Aventyl	25mg	3 HS	\$165	BC / IA covered
Bupropion	Zyban	150mg	BID	\$210	BC / IA covered
Varenicline	Champix	Recommended titration*		\$275	BC / IA covered; quantity limits
*0.5mg qd x 3 days, 0.5mg bid x 4 days, 1mg bid thereafter					
Nicotine Replacement Therapy					
Nicotine Gum	Nicorette	2mg	12 pcs/d	\$205	OTC, IA covered, BC only SS; lifetime \$ limit
Nicotine Patch	Nicoderm	Recommended dose**		\$230	OTC, IA covered, BC only SS; lifetime \$ limit
**21 mg x 8 wks, 14 mg x 2 wks, 7 mg x 2 wks (patch daily)					
Nicotine Gum	Nicorette	4mg	12 pcs/d	\$205	OTC, IA covered, BC only SS; lifetime \$ limit
Nicotine Inhaler	Nicorette	Cartridges	6 ctgs/d	\$410	OTC, IA covered, BC only SS; lifetime \$ limit

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
RESPIRATORY					
Puffers differ in their 'doses' (puffs) per device, so comparing costs is difficult. The 90 day cost was calculated by: 1. Determining the total number of doses over 90 days (using the stated dosing frequency). 2. Multiplying by the calculated cost per dose 3. Adding the dispensing fee and markup. This will not be exactly what patients pay for these products but allows for a more fair comparison between therapies. Brackets next to brand name indicate number of doses per device.					
Bronchodilators / Anti-cholinergics					
Salbutamol	Ventolin (200)	100mcg	4 pfs/d	\$20	BC / IA covered
Ipratropium	Atrovent (200)	200mcg	1pf qid	\$50	BC / IA covered
Tiotropium	Spiriva (30)	18mcg	1 pf qd	\$185	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Glycopyrronium	Seebri (30)	50mcg	1 pf qd	\$190	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Corticosteroids					
Beclomethasone	Qvar (200)	100mcg	1 pf bid	\$75	BC / IA covered
Budesonide	Pulmicort (200)	200mcg	1 pf bid	\$75	BC / IA covered
Fluticasone	Flovent (120)	125mcg	1 pf bid	\$85	BC / IA covered
Fluticasone	Flovent (120)	250mcg	1 pf bid	\$155	BC / IA covered
Long-acting Anti-cholinergic/Long-acting Beta-agonist Combinations					
Glycopyrronium/ Indacaterol	Ultibro (30)	50/110mcg	1 pf qd	\$280	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Long-acting beta agonist/Corticosteroid Combinations					
Budesonide/Formoterol	Symbicort (120)	200/6mcg	1 pf bid	\$155	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Fluticasone/Salmeterol	Advair MDI (120)	250/25mcg	1 pf bid	\$250	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Fluticasone/Vilanterol	Breo Ellipta (30)	100/25mcg	1 pf qd	\$290	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Fluticasone/Salmeterol	Advair Diskus (60)	250/50mcg	1 pf bid	\$345	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Leukotriene Receptor Antagonist					
Montelukast	Singulair	10mg	QD	\$55	SA req'd for BC and IA; BC cov'd if 6-18 years old

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
GASTROINTESTINAL					
***Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) pricing exists for PPIs paid for by Alberta government sponsored drug programs. The drug plan will only pay the cost of rabeprazole 10mg for lansoprazole 15mg, omeprazole 10mg and rabeprazole 10mg, or the cost of pantoprazole magnesium 40mg for all other covered PPIs. The patient will have to pay out of pocket for any difference between that price and the price of the prescribed PPI.					
Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) ***					
Rabeprazole	Pariet	10mg	QD	\$20	BC / IA covered
Pantoprazole Magnesium	Tecta	40mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Omeprazole	Losec	20mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Lansoprazole	Prevacid	30mg	QD	\$60	BC / IA covered
Esomeprazole	Nexium	40mg	QD	\$200	NC by BC or IA
Dexlansoprazole	Dexilant	30mg	QD	\$235	NC by BC or IA
Histamine-2 Receptor Antagonists (H2RAs)					
Ranitidine	Zantac	150mg	BID	\$35	OTC, but BC / IA covered
Helicobacter Pylori Eradication (CLAMET Quadruple Regimen)					
Amoxicillin	Amoxil	1g	BID x 14d	\$105	As 4 separate generic prescriptions; All 4 covered by BC and IA
Clarithromycin	Biaxin	2x250mg	BID x 14d		
Pantoprazole Magnesium	Tecta	40mg	BID x 14d		
Metronidazole	Flagyl	500mg	BID x 14d		
Antiemetics (30 doses)					
Dimenhydrinate	Gravol	50mg	PRN	\$5	OTC, IA covered, BC only SS
Pyridoxine	Pyridoxine	25mg	PRN	\$5	OTC, IA covered but NC BC
Metoclopramide	Maxeran	2x5mg	PRN	\$15	BC / IA covered
Doxylamine/Pyridoxine	Diclectin	10/10mg	PRN	\$35	BC / IA covered
Ondansetron	Zofran	8mg	PRN	\$175	BC / IA covered
Laxatives					
Lactulose	Lactulose	1 tbsp	QD	\$35	OTC; BC / IA covered
PEG3350	Restoralax/Lax-A-Day	17g	QD	\$60	OTC, IA covered but NC BC

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
PSYCHIATRY					
Anti-Depressants					
Citalopram	Celexa	20mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Mirtazapine	Remeron	30mg	HS	\$30	BC / IA covered
Venlafaxine	Effexor XR	75mg	QD	\$30	BC / IA covered
Sertraline	Zoloft	50mg	QD	\$40	BC / IA covered
Escitalopram	Cipralex	10mg	QD	\$45	BC / IA covered
Paroxetine	Paxil	20mg	QD	\$45	BC / IA covered
Fluoxetine	Prozac	20mg	QD	\$45	BC / IA covered
Duloxetine	Cymbalta	30mg	QD	\$60	BC / IA covered
Desvenlafaxine	Pristiq	50mg	QD	\$245	NC by BC or IA
Vortioxetine	Trintellix	20mg	QD	\$320	NC by BC or IA
Antipsychotics					
Quetiapine	Seroquel	25mg	HS	\$15	BC / IA covered
Risperidone	Risperdal	1mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Olanzapine	Zyprexa	5mg,10mg	QD	\$45,\$85	BC / IA covered
Quetiapine	Seroquel XR	300mg	QD	\$110	BC / IA covered
Aripiprazole	Abilify	15mg	QD	\$140	SA req'd for IA, BC covered 13 yrs & older
Anxiolytic/Sedative (90 tablets)					
Lorazepam	Ativan	1mg	PRN	\$15	BC / IA covered
Trazodone	Desyrel	50mg	PRN	\$20	BC / IA covered
Zopiclone	Imovane	7.5mg	PRN	\$25	BC covered, NC by IA
Temazepam	Restoril	30mg	PRN	\$30	BC / IA covered
Stimulants (ADHD)					
Methylphenidate	Ritalin	10mg	BID	\$30	BC / IA covered
Amphetamines, Mixed Salts	Adderall XR	10mg	QD	\$255	NC by BC or IA
Lisdexamfetamine	Vyvanse	20mg	QD	\$285	IA covered; BC covered ages 6 and older
Methylphenidate	Concerta	36mg	QD	\$315	NC BC, IA covered

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
CONTRACEPTIVES					
Max allowable price for 12 week supply unless otherwise stated, and 21 or 28 tab products costs are equivalent. All except IUDs contain Ethinyl Estradiol plus the listed progesterone.					
1st Generation Progestins					
Norethindrone	Synphasic		QD	\$55	BC / IA covered
2nd Generation Progestins					
Levonorgestrel	Alesse		QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Levonorgestrel	Min-Ovral		QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Levonorgestrel	Triquilar		QD	\$65	BC / IA covered
3rd Generation Progestins					
Desogestrel	Marvelon		QD	\$40	BC / IA covered
Norgestimate	Tri-Cyclen Lo		QD	\$45	BC / IA covered
Norgestimate	Tri-Cyclen		QD	\$95	BC / IA covered
Anti-Androgenic					
Drosperinone	Yasmin*		QD	\$55	BC / IA covered
Drosperinone	YAZ*		QD	\$65	NC BC, IA covered
*Same chemical constituents. Yasmin is 21 active pills & 7 pill-free days; Yaz is 24 active pills & 4 pill-free days.					
Transdermal/Vaginal Contraceptives					
Etonogestrel	Nuvaring	Vaginal ring	As dir	\$65	NC BC, IA covered
Norelgestromin	Evra	Patch	As dir	\$75	NC BC, IA covered
Intrauterine Devices (IUDs)					
Copper IUD	Mona Lisa	IUD	As dir	\$5*	NC BC, IA covered for 1 per year
*Upfront cost is \$80 but the IUD lasts 5 years, so cost spread out over 5 years is roughly \$5 every 90 days					
Levonorgestrel	Mirena	IUD	As dir	\$20*	BC / IA covered for 1 per 2 years
*Upfront cost is \$400 but the IUD lasts 5 years, so cost spread out over 5 years is roughly \$20 every 90 days					

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY					
Oral					
Medroxyprogesterone	Provera	5mg	QD	\$20	BC / IA covered
Estradiol-17β	Estrace	1mg	QD	\$40	BC / IA covered
Conjugated Estrogens	Premarin	0.625mg	QD	\$45	BC / IA covered
Micronized progesterone	Prometrium	100mg	HS	\$125	BC / IA covered
Transdermal					
Estradiol-17β Patch	Estradot/Oesclim	50mcg	Twice weekly	\$80	BC / IA covered
Estradiol-17β Gel	Estrogel	2.5g gel=1.5mg estradiol	QD	\$95	BC / IA covered
Vaginal					
Conjugated Estrogens	Premarin Vaginal Cr	0.625mg	QD	\$80	BC / IA covered
Estradiol-17β Vaginal Tablet	Vagifem-10	10mcg	Twice weekly	\$120	BC / IA covered
UROLOGY					
Erectile Dysfunction (4 tablets; may split tablet for lower dose to save costs)					
Sildenafil	Viagra	50mg, 100mg	As dir	\$50	NC by BC or IA
Tadalafil	Cialis	20mg	As dir	\$65	NC by BC or IA
Vardenafil	Levitra	20mg	As dir	\$65	NC by BC or IA
Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)					
Tamsulosin CR	Flomax CR	0.4mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Terazosin	Hytrin	2mg	QD	\$35	BC / IA covered
Dutasteride	Avodart	0.5mg	QD	\$55	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Finasteride	Proscar	5mg	QD	\$60	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Testosterone Replacement					
Testosterone Cypionate	Depo-Testosterone	100mg/mL	200mg Q2W	\$70	BC / IA covered
Testosterone Enanthate	Delatestryl	200mg/mL	400mg q30d	\$80	BC / IA covered
Testosterone Undecanoate	Andriol	40mg	BID	\$105	SA req'd for BC, IA covered
Testosterone Gel	Androgel	5g	QD	\$410	SA req'd for IA, NC by BC
Testosterone Patch	Androderm	5mg/day	QD	\$430	SA req'd for BC and IA

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PRICE COMPARISON OF COMMONLY PRESCRIBED PHARMACEUTICALS IN ALBERTA 2019

Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
ANALGESICS					
Non-Steroidal Antiinflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)					
Naproxen	Naproxen	500mg	BID	\$55	BC / IA covered
Diclofenac	Voltaren SR	75mg	BID	\$60	BC / IA covered
Ketorolac	Toradol	10mg	BID	\$80	BC covered, NC by IA
Diclofenac/Misoprostol	Arthrotec	75mg/200mcg	BID	\$95	BC / IA covered
Naproxen/Esomeprazole	Vimovo	500mg/20mg	BID	\$245	NC by BC or IA
COX2 Inhibitor					
Celecoxib	Celebrex	200mg	QD	\$40	SA req'd for BC, IA covered
Miscellaneous (90 tablets)					
Tramadol/ Acetaminophen	Tramacet	37.5mg/325mg	PRN	\$75	NC by BC or IA
Anti-Migraine (6 tablets)					
Zolmitriptan	Zomig	2.5mg	PRN	\$25	SA req'd BC, IA covered with quantity limits
Sumatriptan	Imitrex	100mg	PRN	\$30	SA req'd BC, IA covered with quantity limits
Neuropathic or Chronic Pain					
Amitriptyline	Elavil	10mg,25mg	HS	\$25	BC / IA covered
Pregabalin	Lyrica	50mg	HS	\$35	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Gabapentin	Neurontin	300mg	TID	\$40	BC / IA covered
Gout					
Allopurinol	Zyloprim	200mg	QD	\$25	BC / IA covered
Colchicine	Colchicine	0.6mg	QD	\$40	BC / IA covered

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
MISCELLANEOUS					
Antibiotics					
Doxycycline	Doxycycline	100mg QD x 7 days		\$15	BC / IA covered
Nitrofurantoin	Macrobid	100mg BID x 3 days		\$15	BC / IA covered
Amoxicillin	Amoxil	500mg TID x 7 days		\$20	BC / IA covered
Azithromycin	Zithromax	500mg, 250mg x 4 days		\$20	BC / IA covered
Ciprofloxacin	Cipro	500mg BID x 5 days		\$20	BC / IA covered
Clarithromycin	Biaxin	2x250mg BID x 5 days		\$20	BC / IA covered
Cephalexin	Keflex	500mg QID x 7 days		\$25	BC / IA covered
Moxifloxacin	Avelox	400mg QD x 7 days		\$25	BC / IA covered
Amoxicillin/Clavulanate	Clavulin	500mg TID x 7 days		\$30	BC / IA covered
Fosfomycin	Monurol	3g as a single dose (uncomplicated UTI)		\$30	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Antifungals (Onychomycosis dosing)					
Fluconazole	Diflucan	150mg once weekly x 12 weeks		\$65	BC / IA covered
Cicloporox	Penlac	Nail lacquer; price for 6g		\$65	NC by BC or IA
Terbinafine	Lamisil	250mg qd x 12 weeks		\$85	BC / IA covered
Efinaconazole	Jublia	Nail lacquer; price for 8mL		\$110	NC by BC or IA
Itraconazole	Sporanox	2x100mg qd x 12 weeks		\$790	BC / IA covered
Osteoporosis					
Alendronate	Fosamax	70mg once weekly		\$40	BC / IA covered
Risedronate	Actonel	35mg once weekly		\$40	BC / IA covered
Etidronate/Calcium	Didrocal	As directed		\$45	BC / IA covered
Zoledronic Acid	Aclasta	5mg yearly		\$105	SA req'd for BC and IA
Denosumab	Prolia	60mg sub-Q every 6 months		\$215	SA req'd for BC and IA
Teriparatide	Forteo	20mcg sub-Q	QD	\$2,885	NC by BC or IA
Dementia					
Donepezil	Aricept	5mg	QD	\$60	SA req'd for BC and IA
Galantamine ER	Reminyl ER	16mg	QD	\$135	SA req'd for BC and IA
Rivastigmine	Exelon	3mg	BID	\$140	SA req'd for BC and IA

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
TOPICALS					
Topical Corticosteroids (Price is for a 30g tube of cream; since majority of price is from dispensing fee, large quantities cause small price increases)					
<i>Class I-Ultra High Potency</i>					
Clobetasol 17-propionate	Dermovate	0.05%	As dir	\$20	BC / IA covered
Betamethasone Dipropionate Glycol	Diprolene	0.05%	As dir	\$30	BC / IA covered
<i>Class II/III-High Potency</i>					
Amcinonide	Cyclocort	0.10%	As dir	\$20	BC / IA covered
Betamethasone Dipropionate	Diprosone	0.05%	As dir	\$20	BC / IA covered
<i>Class IV/V-Moderate Potency</i>					
Betamethasone Valerate	Betaderm/Betnovate	0.10%	As dir	\$15	BC / IA covered
Mometasone Furoate	Elocom	0.10%	As dir	\$30	BC / IA covered
<i>Class VI/VII-Low Potency</i>					
Hydrocortisone	Cortate	1.00%	As dir	\$15	BC / IA covered
Desonide	Desonate	0.05%	As dir	\$25	BC / IA covered
Acne Treatments					
Tretinoin Cream	Stieva-A (25g tube)	0.025%	As dir	\$20	SA req'd for BC, IA covered
Minocycline	Minocin	100mg	QD x 90 days	\$35	SA req'd for IA, BC covered
Benzoyl Peroxide/Clindamycin	Clindoxyl (45g tube)	5%/1%	As dir	\$45	SA req'd for BC, IA covered
Adapalene	Differin (60g tube)	0.10%	As dir	\$145	IA covered but NC BC
Isotretinoin	Accutane	40mg	QD x 90 days	\$200	BC / IA covered
Miscellaneous Topicals					
Tacrolimus	Protopic (30g tube)	0.03%	As dir	\$85	SA req'd for BC and IA
Betamethasone/Calcipotriol	Dovobet (60g tube)	0.05/0.005%	As dir	\$110	BC / IA covered
Imiquimod	Aldara (24x250mg)	5%	As dir	\$305	SA req'd for BC and IA

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Generic Name	Brand name	Strength	Dosing	90 Day Cost (unless otherwise noted)	Coverage
Lice					
Permethrin	Nix	1%	As dir	\$20	BC / IA covered
Pyrethrins/ Piperonyl Butoxide	R&C	0.33%/3%	As dir	\$20	BC / IA covered
Dimethicone	Nyda	50%	As dir	\$30	BC / IA covered
Isopropyl Myristate	Resultz	50%	As dir	\$30	BC / IA covered
IRON PREPARATIONS					
Iron Salt	Brand Name	Total Dose (mg/tab or 5mL)	Elemental Iron (mg/tab or 5mL)	Cost of 90 day supply (100mg elemental iron/day)	Coverage
Ferrous fumarate	Wampole	300	100	\$5	IA covered but NC BC
Ferrous sulphate	Generic brands	300	60	\$10	IA covered but NC BC
Ferrous gluconate	Generic brands	300	35	\$20	IA covered but NC BC
Ferrous fumarate	Palafer	300	100	\$35	IA covered but NC BC
Polysaccharide Iron	Feramax	150	150	\$35	NC by BC or IA
Ferrous sulphate	Generic adult susp	150	30	\$80	IA covered, BC only SS
Ferrous sulphate	Generic infant susp	375	75	\$165	IA covered, BC only SS
OPIOID DEPENDENCY					
Generic Name	Brand Name	Daily Dose	Dispensing frequency	Cost of 2 Week Supply	Coverage
Methadone	Methadose	60-120mg (doses individualized)	Daily	\$185-200	BC / IA covered
Methadone	Methadose	60-120mg (doses individualized)	Every 2 weeks	\$25-40	BC / IA covered
Buprenorphine/ Naloxone	Suboxone	2/0.5mg-8/2mg (doses individualized)	Daily	\$180-190	BC / IA covered
Buprenorphine/ Naloxone	Suboxone	2/0.5mg-8/2mg (doses individualized)	Every 2 weeks	\$25-30	BC / IA covered

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About This Document

In the summer of 2011, Jayson worked as a pharmacy student with Tony in Peace River. One day Dr. Kolber stopped by for a visit. He mentioned, in passing, “Boy, it would be great to have a list of common drugs and what they cost.”

As pharmacists, Tony and Jayson couldn't agree more. We don't mind calling busy, hard working doctors with deep clinical questions but always feel like bothers if it is about coverage limitations or price concerns. So, as preceptors so often do to students, Tony told Jayson to do all the grunt work. Then Tony took all the credit for the work and presented it as his own to Dr. Kolber. Dr. Kolber forgot he mentioned the idea but loved it nonetheless and proposed making it even bigger and bringing it to the ACFP. Thus began our collaboration.

Jayson has since become a fully licensed pharmacist so Tony does the grunt work and, as recompense, lists Jayson as a co-author. In sincerity, lots of consideration, research, and extensive editing goes into this document by all the authors, our professional colleagues, and the great team at ACFP. Tina and Mike have been helping out with the document for a few years - and we eventually included them as authors.

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Mike is a Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Alberta. He practices in Peace River and belongs to the University of Alberta Department of Family Medicine's Evidence Based Medicine group. Mike contributes to Tools for Practice, presents at the ACFP's CPD Roadshows, and is the Planning Committee Chair for the Practical Evidence for Informed Practice conference.

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