

# MEDIXFACTS

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## Shortages

The following products had been experiencing shortages but product is now coming back into the market place. A shortage of Nitrofurantoin 100mg BID Caps (generic Macrobid) caused the price to skyrocket this past spring. Prices have fallen only about 20% since its high water mark in April. After an improvement in availability and an initial price reduction, Teva has again jacked-up the price of metronidazole (generic Flagyl).

The availability of clarithromycin (generic Biaxin) had improved but is again a problem. In addition, Sandoz is increasing the cost nearly 8-fold. Pharmedix, as usual, will maintain its price for as long as our current stock lasts.

The Cadista recall of methylprednisolone 4mg dose packs at the whole-sale (not retail) has caused huge shortage of and a major price increase for this product. Product availability is still extremely spotty and prices are 8-10 fold higher for the product. We suggest switching to prednisone 5mg dose packs or vials in 21's as a replacement until prices come down.

Dexamethasone Sodium Phosphate is also still in short or nonexistent supply since its recall earlier this year.

## **New Generic Releases and Major Price Reductions For Aricept, Cozaar, Effexor XR-Caps, Flomax, Levaquin and Mirapex**

The cost of several popular brand drugs has dropped significantly. The biggest price reduction can be seen with **Levaquin™ (Levofloxacin)**. A 10 day course of 500mg Levofloxacin, formerly over \$175.00, is now under \$10.00. Don't rush to overuse this product and keep in mind the potential for tendon rupture with this product (See product Med Guide).

The 180 day exclusivity period for new generics of **Effexor XR-Caps (Venlafaxine)** has expired resulting in a huge price decrease for this product. This product is available in 37.5mg, 75mg and 150mg strengths in 30's or 90's.

**Cozaar (Losartan)** is the first generic available in the group of drugs called angiotensin II receptor antagonists. It keeps blood vessels from narrowing, which lowers blood pressure and improves blood flow. Losartan is used to treat high blood pressure (hypertension). It is also used to lower the risk of stroke in certain people with heart disease. Losartan is available in 3 strengths 25mg, 50mg and 100mg in package sizes of 30's or 100's.

**Aricept (Donepezil)** is used to treat mild to moderate dementia caused by Alzheimer's disease. Donepezil improves the function of cells in the brain by preventing the breakdown of a chemical called acetylcholine. People with dementia usually have lower levels of this chemical, which is important for the processes of memory, thinking, and reasoning. Donepezil is available in 5mg and 10mg tablets and ODT tablets in package sizes of 30's or 90's.

**Mirapex (Pramipexole)** is a dopamine agonist. Exactly how Mirapex works is not known. It may increase the action of certain chemical receptors in the brain. Pramipexole is used to treat the signs and symptoms of Parkinson disease. It is also used to treat restless legs syndrome (RLS). Pramipexole is available in six strengths in package sizes of 30's and 90's.

**Flomax (Tamsulosin)** belongs to a group of drugs called alpha-adrenergic blockers. Tamsulosin relaxes the muscles in the prostate and bladder neck, making it easier to urinate. Tamsulosin is used to improve urination in men with benign prostatic hyperplasia (enlarged prostate). Available in 0.4mg strength in package sizes of 30's and 100's.

**Nasacort AQ (Triamcinolone)** is a nasal spray that contains triamcinolone that prevents the release of substances in the body that cause inflammation. It used treat nasal allergy symptoms such as sneezing, itching, and runny nose caused by seasonal allergies or hay fever.

Contact customer service for current pricing on these new generic items.

## **Possible Oral Contraceptive Shortage Looming**

There are rumors that an Oral Contraceptive shortage may be heading our way. One of the main suppliers of oral contraceptives may be having product shortages due to FDA manufacturing issues during the second half of the year. This will put a strain on the other two major suppliers of generic oral contraceptives which most likely will lead to shortages and price increases. Pharmedix will keep its clients apprised of the situation.