

Pharmacy Briefing | March 2023

THE LATEST ON PHARMACY NEWS, TRENDS, AND INSIGHTS

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Highlights

- **Insulin manufacturers** decrease prices and cap out-of-pocket costs for patients
- **FiercePharma** publishes “Top 10 Drugs losing U.S. Exclusivity in 2023” report
- **Colorado** proposes legislation capping out-of-pocket costs for epinephrine injectors
- **Cardinal Health** publishes 2023 Biosimilars Report

FDA Approvals and Launches

- **Altuviiio (antihemophilic Factor (Recombinant), Fc-VWF-XTEN Fusion Protein-ehtl)** is approved to treat hemophilia A.
- **Syfovre (pegcetacoplan)** is approved as the first treatment for geographic atrophy, a cause of blindness for more than one million people in country.
- **Zavzpret (zavegepant)** nasal spray is approved to treat acute migraines.

News

Insulin manufacturers announce price decreases and caps on out-of-pocket costs

- Eli Lilly cites price reductions of up to 70% for insulin lispro, *Humalog*, *Humulin*, and *Rezvoglar*, biosimilar interchangeable with *Lantus*.
 - Out-of-pocket costs will be capped at \$35 at participating retail pharmacies for patients with commercial insurance.
- Novo Nordisk cites price reductions of up to 75% for *Levemir*, *Novolin*, *NovoLog*, and their unbranded counterparts.
- Sanofi reduces the list price of *Lantus* by 78% and *Apidra* by 70%.
 - Out-of-pocket costs will be capped at \$35 for *Lantus* for patients with commercial insurance.
- The announced price changes and co-pay caps take effect on various dates.

[Read more \(1\)](#) [Read more \(2\)](#) [Read more \(3\)](#)

FiercePharma publishes “Top 10 Drugs losing U.S. Exclusivity in 2023” report

- Drugs detailed in the report include *Humira* (adalimumab), *Stelara* (ustekinumab), and ADHD treatment *Vyvanse* (lisdexamfetamine).

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Colorado proposes legislation capping out-of-pocket costs for epinephrine injectors

- The proposed bill requires that pharmacies collect an amount not to exceed \$60 for a 2-pack of “all covered prescription epinephrine auto-injectors”.

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Cardinal Health publishes 2023 Biosimilars Report

- Landmark developments cited include the first ophthalmologic biosimilars, growth in the numbers of products achieving interchangeability, and the varying formulary coverage of *Humira* (adalimumab) biosimilars.
- The report also discusses potential indirect and direct impacts that the Inflation Reduction Act might have on the biosimilar market.

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CVS outlines obesity epidemiology and coverage considerations for treatment

- CVS projects increasing rates of obesity and that up to 55% of patients seeking treatment will be prescribed weight-loss drugs such as *Wegovy*.
 - Traditionally, GLP-1 agonists have been used to treat diabetes but they have become increasingly popular for use in weight management since *Wegovy*'s approval in 2021.
- A comprehensive strategy should include appropriate coverage guidelines for patients and education for both prospective patients and health care providers.

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White House describes prescription drug benefits of Inflation Reduction Act

- The statement provides high-level data and touts the benefits of Medicare inflation rebates, price negotiations with manufacturers, insulin cost caps, and vaccine policies.

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Federal court judge reverses Affordable Care Act (ACA) provision requiring plans to cover preventive treatments

- The ACA provision mandated coverage, at no cost to members, for preventive treatments such as certain cholesterol medications, contraceptives, and supplements,
- The ruling is expected to undergo the appeals process and could be overturned by a higher court.
 - A similar ruling was overturned by the Supreme Court in June 2021.

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Courts continue legislative battle over abortion drug mifepristone

- A district court in Texas overturned the FDA's approval of the drug, however, an appeals court reinstated its approval.
- In addition to contesting the drug's FDA approval, other recent legislation has disputed how and when the drug may be obtained by patients.

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FDA Advisory Committee votes in favor of approving Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir/ritonavir) for the treatment of COVID-19

- If approved, the drug would be the first FDA-approved oral treatment for COVID-19. It was authorized for emergency use in December 2021.

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