

Patients & patents: Why Drug Prices Stay High

What is a pharmaceutical patent?

It takes 10-15 years to develop

It costs over \$1 billion CAD

Gives drug companies exclusive rights to sell a medicine for 20 years in Canada



Impact on patients

Increases risk of worsening disease control and work disability

High costs for medicines forces patients to skip or ration medication

Reduced quality of life as patients are forced to pick between paying for medications and essentials like food or housing

With fewer treatment choices, patients may be limited to medications that don't work well for them or cause more side effects



How patents are misused

Creates monopolies on original-brand medication

Delays competition from medications like generics and biosimilars

Forces patients and healthcare systems to pay for medications at high "patented price"



Impact on healthcare system

Billions in lost savings for public and private drug plans

Reduced money and resources for hospitals, research, and new care

Longer wait times for care due to stretched budgets

Less competition means there's less pressure on pharmaceutical manufacturers to bring new medications to market



The benefits of post-patent medications

Generics = up to 95% cheaper

Biosimilars = 30-50% cheaper

Lower research costs

Improved medication adherence = better health outcomes

Allow health care providers to tailor treatment plans based on patient's needs

Increase treatment options for doctors and patients



More learning resources for patients

[STAT: Do drugs get cheaper when their patents expire?](#)

[Patrick Kelly: How pharmaceutical patents make drugs expensive](#)

[TED talk: Priti Krishtel - Why are drug prices so high?](#)

[Investigating the outdated US patent system](#)

[Arthritis Consumer Experts Biosimilars • Exchange](#)

[University of Toronto: Foundations of Originator and](#)

[Biosimilars Biologics: for Patients and Caregivers](#)



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