Are Generic Antihypertensive Drugs as Effective as Brand-Name Ones?

Generic drugs are chemically equivalent to brand-name drugs but they cost much less.

However, clinicians and patients have concerns about the efficacy of generic drugs.

Are generic drugs as effective as brand-name drugs at lowering blood pressure (BP)?

Patients with hypertension (high BP) from 12 provinces of China (N = 6,528)

Over 2.5 years

Brand-name antihypertensives (N = 2,176)

Generic antihypertensives (N = 4,352)

Evaluation of blood pressure lowering effect by generic and brand-name antihypertensive drugs treatment: a multicenter prospective study in China

Zhang et al. (2021) | DOI: 110.1097/CM9.0000000000001413

Efficacy measurement

- BP reduction
- Cardiovascular outcomes

Generic and brand name drugs are similar in terms of:

- BP lowering efficacy
- Percentage of patients with BP control
- Cardiovascular outcomes including coronary heart disease and stroke

Cost effectiveness

Generic antihypertensive drugs are effective and lower cost and have great public health potential, particularly in low- and middle-income areas

Generic Brand-name

Reduction in systolic BP (mmHg)

7.1 0.0
2.0 4.0
6.0 8.0

• BP lowering efficacy
• Percentage of patients with BP control
• Cardiovascular outcomes including coronary heart disease and stroke

Annual incremental cost-effectiveness ratio per patient per mmHg of systolic pressure reduction: US$315.40

Generic Brand-name