

## Lipitor Goes Generic – December 1, 2011

### What you need to know:

- Pfizer's *Lipitor* patent expired on November 30, 2011, and its generic version, called **atorvastatin**, is now available.
- Atorvastatin is available at the generic or 1<sup>st</sup> tier copay.
- The generic version contains the same active ingredients as brand-name *Lipitor*, it's as safe and effective as *Lipitor*, and it's available at a lower cost.
- As often happens with popular brand medications that lose their patent, some pharmacies (including Medco) negotiate with the manufacturer to reduce the cost of the brand to the generic price.
- As a result, it's possible your retail or mail-order generic atorvastatin prescription may be filled with brand-name *Lipitor* pills. In this case, the pharmacy is dispensing *Lipitor* as the generic and only charging you and the Trust Plan a generic price. Using a brand drug as the generic is known as using a "house generic."
- You will be charged your generic co-payment as long as you allow generic substitution. If you specifically request the brand Lipitor, or if your doctor does so by writing your prescription for Lipitor by name with "DAW" (*dispense as written*) indicated, you will be charged a brand copay and the cost to the Plan will be greater as well.
- Pfizer has been promoting a Lipitor \$4 co-pay card and recently has been increasing its promotion to patients and physicians. This card is illegal for use with Medicare, Medicaid, or other federal/state programs. As a result, if a Trust Plan Member submits a Lipitor co-pay card, or any coupon, to a pharmacy, it must be returned to comply with the law.