

PRICES FOR CERTAIN BRAND NAME DRUGS - UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND MEXICO

Retail prices for prescription drugs vary considerably internationally. Whether this is a result of "cost shifting" by pharmaceutical manufacturers, price controls in other countries, relative poverty in other countries, high litigation costs in the United States, or other factors is an issue that has received much public debate in recent years. United States Representative Bernard Sanders (I-VT) has sponsored federal legislation to authorize the reimportation of drugs into the United States from other countries, thereby allowing United States consumers to purchase those drugs at reduced prices. Representative Sanders maintains a web site which compares the prices of various prescription drugs in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and other countries. The following information was obtained from Representative Sanders' web site, located at www.bernie.house.gov. The following table shows, for 10 commonly prescribed drugs, the estimated average United States cost, the estimated cost in Canada (shown in United States dollars), and the estimated cost in Mexico (shown in United States dollars). The web site maintained by Representative Sanders does not contain comparative data for all drugs. The drugs listed are among the top 25 drugs in North Dakota based on the dollar amount of claims paid by Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota during the second quarter of calendar year 2001.

Prescription Brand Name	Category/Treatment	Dosage and Quantity	Average Price in United States	Average Price in Canada	Percentage Savings in Canada	Average Price in Mexico	Percentage Savings in Mexico
Celebrex	Antirheumatic	100 mg, 60	\$77.15	\$33.75	56.3%	\$36.00	53.3%
Glucophage	Type II diabetes	500 mg, 90	\$64.15	\$14.00	78.2%	\$30.00	53.2%
Lipitor	Lower cholesterol	20 mg, 90	\$229.93	\$164.00	28.7%	\$108.00	53.0%
Premarin	Estrogen supplement	.3 mg, 90	\$35.17	\$12.00	65.9%	\$17.00	51.7%
Prilosec	Antiulcer	20 mg, 90	\$360.50	\$170.36	52.7%	\$169.00	53.1%
Prozac	Antidepressant	20 mg, 45	\$105.64	\$43.00	59.3%	\$50.00	52.7%
Singulair	Antiasthmatic	10 mg, 30	\$64.42	\$52.00	19.3%	\$30.00	53.4%
Welbutrin	Antidepressant	150 mg, 60	\$81.98	\$45.00	45.1%	\$39.00	52.4%
Zocor	Lower cholesterol	80 mg, 30	\$101.82	\$60.00	41.1%	\$48.00	52.9%
Zoloft	Antidepressant	50 mg, 30	\$62.00	\$31.00	50.0%	\$29.00	53.2%