

GLOSSARY

- ◇ **Brand name drugs:** a medication protected by a patent, which gives its manufacturer exclusive rights to sell the drug. Patents usually last 10-14 years.
- ◇ **Co-pay:** the set amount that you pay as a share of each of your prescriptions.
- ◇ **Deductible:** the amount you pay each year for your prescription drugs, before your coverage kicks in.
- ◇ **Doughnut hole:** also referred to as Coverage Gap. Most medicare drug plans have a coverage gap. After you and your plan have spent a certain amount of money (varies by plan) for covered drugs, you must pay all costs out-of-pocket while you are in the 'gap'. Once you reach the gap limit set by your plan, Medicare catastrophic coverage kicks in and your plan will resume paying 95 percent of your drug costs until the end of the year.
- ◇ **Drug-drug interactions:** occurs when two or more medicines react with each other to cause unwanted effects. It may cause one medicine not to work or to be stronger than it should be.
- ◇ **Formulary:** a list of preferred drugs. Your Medicare Part D formulary is the list of drugs your plan will cover. It is important to find out if the drugs you take are included in your plans formulary.
- ◇ **Premium:** the set amount you pay to your insurance company or drug plan provider each month for your prescription drug costs.
- ◇ **Generics:** copies of brand-name medicines whose patents have expired. The FDA regulates generic drugs and all generics, by law, must have exactly the same active chemicals as the brands they copy. Generics will have the same medical benefit as a brand name drug and usually cost less.

- ◇ **Labeling:** detailed written descriptions of a prescription drug's intended use based on studies submitted by the FDA.
- ◇ **"Off-label" Drug Use:** when a doctor prescribes a drug for a use that has not been approved by the FDA. Off-label drug use is legal and may be beneficial, but there are still some concerns.
- ◇ **Pill splitting:** literally cutting a pill in half to get two doses of the medicine for the price of one.
- ◇ **Prescription Assistance Programs (PAPs):** also referred to as Patient Assistance Programs, help people who have no or little health insurance or drug coverage to pay for their prescription medicines. Some states have state specific programs. Most PAPs have income and asset requirements.
- ◇ **Tier:** the category your medicines are in. Each tier in your plan usually requires a different co-pay. For example, the least expensive tier is usually comprised of generic drugs, medium cost tier is usually made up of preferred brand-name drugs, the more expensive tier includes non-preferred brand-name drugs and the most expensive tier includes rare and very high cost drugs.
- ◇ **Side effects:** unplanned symptoms or feelings you have when taking a medicine.