

Substituting generic medication is legal

Q. I recently had a prescription filled for some medication ordered by my doctor. When I went to pick up the prescription, I noticed that the name of the drug was different than the one my doctor ordered. The pharmacist said he gave me a generic drug because it was less expensive. Can he do this without my permission? How do I find out if it is less expensive?

A. According to Michigan law, a pharmacist may substitute a generic drug if it is less expensive and equally as effective. If a doctor does not write on the prescription "dispense as indicated," or the patient does not say that he or she wants the specific drug, then giving the generic drug is perfectly legal.

Many drug companies may manufacture a drug, with the exact same ingredients, under different names. These generic drugs contain the same ingredients and are equal to the name brand medications and do not cost as much. Any pharmacist is required to provide you with information concerning the price of all drugs. You can ask the pharmacist for all the prices and you can make the comparison yourself. I think you will find that generic drugs are considerably less expensive than the name brands. Your drugist may have thought he or she was doing you a favor, but it is your choice and you

have the right to have exactly what you want.

Q. My 92-year-old neighbor's relatives are talking about having their father sent to a mental hospital. I don't think there is anything wrong with him, he is just old and forgetful. Can they do this to him? I think it would be a shame. He doesn't think there is anything wrong with him either.

A. No one can be involuntarily committed to a psychiatric hospital or psychiatric hospital unit merely because they are old. In order to have a person involuntarily committed, unless it is a private pay situation, there must either be a Probate Court hearing or an application filed with a local community health services program. Ultimately the court must decide if the person is mentally ill. The court decision is based on whether or not there is a reasonable expectation that the person is in danger of harming themselves or others or cannot attend to their own basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. In addition, in order to petition the court, a physician or a psychiatrist or a statement that they have examined the individual and believe the person needs treatment, must accompany the application or petition.

On aging columnist Renee Mahler is a gerontologist and a former member of the Michigan State Commission on Services to the Aging. To leave a message for Mahler, from a touch-tone phone, call (313)953-2047, mailbox 1869. Send your questions to her at The Eccentric Newspaper, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

ON AGING



RENEE MAHLER

Volunteers needed for parenting program

Remember when you gave birth to your first child? The elation, the excitement — and the sheer terror of being a parent for the very first time!

You can help others cope with the turmoil of a new baby as a volunteer for William Beaumont Hospital's Parenting Program. Volunteers answer questions, offer guidance on parenting issues and baby care, and help ease the "growing pains" experienced by most new parents.

Parenting volunteers complete 24 hours of

training before being paired one-on-one with a family. Volunteers begin working with the family when mother and baby are still in the hospital, and they continue to keep in contact during personal visits and over the phone.

Three months after the birth of the new baby, the Parenting Program matches new parents with other parents who have children the same age. Parent group meetings sponsored by the Parenting Program focus on topics such as infant development, nutri-

tion and adjusting to parenthood.

As a Parenting Program volunteer, you can choose from a variety of roles, such as meeting with new families following delivery, providing phone calls and/or home visits to nearby first-time families, offering support to breastfeeding mothers or becoming a trained parent group leader.

To volunteer for the program, or for more information, call: (248) 551-1455 if you live in the Beaumont Royal Oak area, (248) 828-6822 if you live in the Beaumont Troy area.

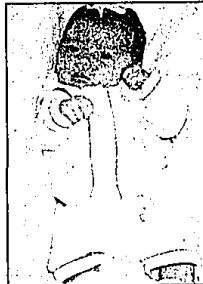
BIRTHS

Jessica Ann Panone

Richard and Maureen Panone of Rochester announce the birth of their daughter, Jessica Ann Panone, on May 31 at Crittenton Hospital.

She has three older brothers: Daniel 7, Nicholas 6 and Christopher 2.

Grandparents are Patrick and Helen O'Callaghan of Flushing and Bernard and Franca Panone of Centerline.



Lauryn Marie Kepsel

Billy and Cindy Kepsel of

Rochester Hills announce the birth of their daughter, Lauryn Marie, on Aug. 19 at William Beaumont Hospital, Troy.

Sacred Heart golf outing set

The seventh-annual golf outing by the Academy of Sacred Heart Parents' Club of Bloomfield Hills will be Sept. 28 at Great Oaks Country Club in Rochester Hills.

Four-person teams will play a best-ball scramble, with a 1 p.m. shotgun start.

Registration starts at 11 a.m. and lunch precedes the tournament. There will be a dinner and gifts, plus a live auction. Cost of the outing is \$250.

For information and tickets call the school at 646-8900, ext. 172.

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Area walk for diabetes is Oct. 4

America's Walk for Diabetes is being held at Metro Detroit locations on Sunday, Oct. 4, to raise funds for the American Diabetes Association. Walks will take place at Kensington, Lake Erie and Metro Beach sites.

The event raises money for

research to find a cure for this serious disease, which is the sixth-leading cause of death by disease in America. Call 1-800-264-WALK to register or volunteer; visit the internet site at www.diabetes.org/walk.

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Featuring: **JOEL R. SAPER, MD, FACP**
Head Pain Expert, Author & Educator
Director, Michigan Head-Pain & Neurological Institute
Professor of Neurology at Michigan State University
Past Chair, American Council for Headache Education



Expert Panel

- Dr. David Biondi, Neurologist and Pain Medicine Specialist
- Dr. Barbaranne Bravica, Neuropsychologist
- Dr. Steven Silverman, Anesthesiologist
- Dr. James Weintraub, Neurologist and Sleep Disorders Specialist

Topics

- Headaches in Adults & Children
- Hormones & Headaches
- Sleep & Head Pain
- Stress & Headaches: Facts vs Fiction
- Fibromyalgia & Related Syndromes
- Treatment Strategies & Current Research
- Impact of Pain on Families
- Depression & Pain

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To Register or for Additional Information

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