

## Prescription prices: An unexpected bargain

The inflation-burdened shopper may find fewer bargains today, but at least one class of products is a better buy now than a decade ago: prescription drugs.

The Consumer Price Index, compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, shows that since 1964, while the index for food has risen, the prescription drug index has declined from 102 to 100.

Ralph Kaye of Perry's Drugs in Troy concurred.

"We've spent the last two years on a campaign not to raise new prices," Kaye said. "Generally new products have high prices, some of which is to cover the cost of research, but we find that in six months or so, they drop."

"We get many price drops and few increases," he said. "Prescription prices have not kept up with the cost of living."

KAYE SAID although Perry's does not list all prescription prices, they do provide a shopper comparison service so that anyone may call in for price information.

Kaye expects that soon lists of the 100 or 200 most common drug prices will be prominently displayed in the stores.

The area's Cunningham Drugs will begin substituting generic drugs after January, 1975, as provided by new legislation.

"Some things in brand names don't exist in generic drugs," said Ed Betel, Cunningham pharmacist.

BETEL AGREED that prescription prices have decreased.

"The Pharmacy Manufacturer's Association has shown that prices have gone down," Betel said.

"Often when drugs first come out, dosage needs are larger and as this changes, the price is reduced," added Betel. "Antibiotics have gone down tremendously in price."

Actually, tablet for tablet, today's medicine costs the consumer an average of two percent less than ten years ago.

Prescription drugs account for only about eight cents out of every dollar spent on medical care, compared to 15 cents in 1964.

"FOR EACH DOLLAR of prescription sales, the manufacturer realizes only 4.7 cents profit after tax," said Richard Furlaud, president of Squibb Corp.

One reason people grump about drug prices is that medicine is not the

kind of thing a person ordinarily wants to buy.

Since doctors write prescriptions and pharmacists fill them, the consumer knows much less about medicine than about other products he buys.

The average annual expenditure per person for prescriptions in the U.S. in 1972 was \$22.50.

Interestingly, the spending per person on alcohol was \$97.45 in 1972 — more than four times the tab for drugs.

KEEN COMPETITION in the pharmaceutical industry is the reason for the decline in drug prices.

Today's prescription drugs, along with other improvements in medical care, enable physicians to cure illness faster, reduce the length of hospitalization and return patients to productive work sooner.

New medicine helped cut the average hospital stay of a tuberculosis patient from 461 days in 1950 to about 78 days in 1972, reducing the cost to the patient, including treatment and lost income, in half.

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## Adult program expanded

Advance registrations are now being accepted for adult counseling programs offered by Oakland University's Continuum Center this fall.

The new season will be launched with "Personal Growth for Women" in Dearborn on Sept. 9.

"Personal Growth for Women" will also begin at Oakland University Oct. 1 and in Royal Oak Nov. 4.

Each program includes a free orientation and six three-hour sessions.

The center is placing a new emphasis this year on programs for both men and women, beginning Sept. 12 with "Life Work Planning," a ten-session program on the Oakland University campus, and "Alternative Career Options" for teachers Sept. 21.

A new program called "Personal Growth for Men and Women" will be offered starting Sept. 23.

Other programs for both men and women include: transactional analysis, communication workshops for individuals and for couples.

A variety of additional programs for all include: "Creative Expression through Drama," "Introductory Gestalt Workshop," "Career Development for Women," "Beginning Personal Growth for Retirees" and "Marriage Enrichment."

Most programs are open to men and women of all ages. Advance registrations are requested.

For information, call the Continuum Center at 377-3033.

## Veterans offered education

Veterans Outreach, a new program aimed at providing working veterans in Oakland County with an education in business and management, has been established by the Oakland Division of the Detroit College of Business.

A large number of veterans who left active service after Jan. 31, 1965, have never utilized benefits which expire in June 1976, according to Martin E. Cieslak, director of the Oakland Division.

The objective of the Veterans Outreach Program is to locate those vet-

erans and ease their re-entry into the education process.

The program consists of a two-year cycle of classes leading to an associate degree in general management. Unique features of the program include no registration fee, no advance tuition payment and continuous enrollment and certification.

Both day and evening classes, meeting two days per week, are offered. Remedial instruction in math and college English are integral parts of the program.

All interested persons should contact Cieslak at 851-7001 or at 18 W. Lawrence, Pontiac.

## ORT honors Mrs. Bergman



MRS. THEODORE BERGMAN

Mrs. Theodore Bergman is being honored by Knob Circle Chapter of Women's American ORT as Woman of the Year.

The recognition is being accorded Mrs. Bergman for many years of work for ORT.

A dinner followed by professional entertainment is being planned for Saturday evening, Aug. 31.

Mrs. Bergman has been in charge of ORT's Clothes Port for many years.

A charge will be made for the dinner with proceeds going to ORT's Israeli School of Engineering.

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Shown from the collection:

Left: The teal green  
sweater suit with V-top,  
skirt, cuffed cap and  
BIG muffler. . . all of a tone  
dressing in acrylic/wool  
knit. 6 to 14 sizes. \$115

Right: The grey knit  
twin-sweatered pantsuit  
with acrylic chenille  
V-shell, wrap cardigan,  
acrylic/wool pants. .  
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