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## The Benefits Source

Component Benefits Committee

### Component Benefits Committee

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A number of members have contacted the Benefits Committee with concerns that their claim for prescription drugs have been delayed or denied because ClaimSecure has instructed them to apply for Special Authorization.

The list of prescription drugs that require Special Authorization can be found through:

ACAeronet -> My Forms -> Special Authorization -> Drug List

OR

Via the ClaimSecure app. My Forms -> Special Authorization -> Drug List


One of the reasons this is a long list is because recently there were a large number of brand name drugs on the market whose patent had expired. This means that there are generic alternatives available that cost a fraction of the price and are commonly used as an alternative or a substitute to the brand name drug. This is an attempt to manage the finances that fund our plan as a whole to ensure its viability. In certain cases your doctor is able to provide medical support to prove that the brand name drug is required and that is where special authorization comes in.

This practise is a benefits industry attempt to prepare for a number of new brand name drugs that are coming onto the market that are extremely expensive. In short, this was done in order to manage the funds and ensure that the new drugs coming on market are available to the members despite their high cost thus expanding coverage for everyone. This is also done with the knowledge that the older drugs have a medically proven cheaper alternative still available.

### Is there a difference between generic drugs and brand name drugs?

Below you will find an explanation from the RAMQ (Regie de l'assurance maladie)

- Brand name drugs are patented by pharmaceutical companies and approved by Health Canada. Generic drugs are exact replicas containing the same substances, and they must also be approved by Health Canada according to the same quality standards. In the case of generics, only the non-medicinal ingredients, such as coloring substances, may differ. Generic manufacturers must also provide Health Canada with studies proving that these substances don't affect the quality or effectiveness of the product. Generics are less costly compared to brand name drugs. For further information, visit the website of the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux

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at [www.inesss.qc.ca](http://www.inesss.qc.ca).

The drugs on the list require special authorization because they are only covered under the plan under certain medical circumstances or after an adverse reaction to alternative drugs is found (ie an allergy).

You will find the prescription drugs listed alphabetically along with a set of criteria listed for each particular drug that must be met in order for it to be approved.

This list is what you should show to the doctor in order to fill out the special authorization form. Unfortunately, if there is a cost for filling out the form it is not covered under the current terms of our plan.

Attached you will find a Q and A on Special Authorization from ClaimSecure which includes a section titled "**tips on making it easy: the special authorization process**". Click [HERE](#) to view.

**\*\*\* Note that where it is referenced to call their toll free line for more information, as an Air Canada plan member you should access your account through ACAeronet -> HR Connex -> Health and Dental Benefits or call 1-888-982-7878 from 7am to 11pm EST, Monday through Friday.**

If your claim has been denied after following the special authorization process and you still feel there is a possibility that your claim has been wrongfully denied contact your local directly or email the benefits committee at [benefits@accomponent.ca](mailto:benefits@accomponent.ca).

*Disclaimer: This bulletin is for information purposes only and does not preclude the union from exercising the rights under the Collective Agreement Article 13 nor does it serve as an interpretation of Article 22 or any other pertinent articles of the Collective Agreement.*

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