

Fluoxetine and paroxetine prices plummet

Fluoxetine and paroxetine prices experienced double-digit declines last month as more than one trade supplier improved its offer to independent pharmacists and dispensing doctors. This was evident because the lowest prices declined less quickly than the average prices. Packs of 30 paroxetine 20mg tablets, for example, were 15% cheaper on average at £1.26 (US\$2.07), but the lowest price in April only declined by 5% to £0.89 in May (see Figure 1).

Fluoxetine's Drug Tariff reimbursement price was £1.42 in May for a 30-capsule pack of the 20mg strength, which gave pharmacists a profit margin of 85% on the lowest price and a 70% margin on the average price. Eli Lilly has dropped its trade price for Prozac so that it is now just £1.50 for an equivalent pack. However, this is still higher than the Drug Tariff price, and much more than generic prices.

BIGGEST FALLERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Glimepiride tabs 3mg 30	£0.37	±0	£0.83	-35
Prednisolone tabs 5mg 28	£2.98	-1	£4.98	-24
Bendroflumethiazide tabs 2.5mg 28	£0.09	-10	£0.14	-24
Ramipril tabs 1.25mg 28	£0.39	-20	£0.76	-23
Ranitidine tabs 300mg 30	£0.74	-6	£1.23	-22
Glimepiride tabs 1mg 30	£0.23	+5	£0.39	-21

Figure 1 (below): Comparison between the periods 1-30 April 2011 and 1-31 May 2011 of the lowest and average UK trade prices of fast-moving generics. Each average price was calculated from at least 11 data points. Figure 2 (above) and Figure 3 (above right): Biggest changes recorded between the periods 1-30 April

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Alendronate tabs 70mg 4	£0.35	-8	£0.49	-8
Amlodipine tabs 10mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.32	-6
Carvedilol tabs 12.5mg 28	£0.47	-4	£0.62	-4
Ciprofloxacin tabs 500mg 10	£0.25	+4	£0.34	-9
Citalopram tabs 20mg 28	£1.10	-31	£2.56	-33
Clarithromycin tabs 250mg 14	£0.79	-15	£1.34	-8
Clopidogrel tabs 75mg 30	£1.05	-9	£1.43	-9
Enalapril tabs 20mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.35	-3
Finasteride tabs 5mg 28	£1.09	+11	£1.45	-7
Fluoxetine caps 20mg 30	£0.21	-9	£0.42	-18
Fosinopril tabs 20mg 28	£1.44	-4	£1.93	-1
Glimepiride tabs 4mg 30	£0.56	-5	£0.80	-10
Lamotrigine tabs 100mg 56	£2.20	+6	£2.81	-6
Lansoprazole caps 30mg 28	£0.88	-1	£1.02	-6
Lisinopril tabs 20mg 28	£0.36	±0	£0.47	-6
Losartan tabs 50mg 28	£0.37	-10	£0.57	-14
Losartan tabs 100mg 28	£0.45	-2	£0.71	-9
Metformin tabs 500mg 84	£0.47	-2	£0.70	-2
Mirtazapine tabs 30mg 28	£0.88	-5	£1.29	-8
Omeprazole caps 20mg 28	£0.59	-5	£0.79	-12
Ondansetron tabs 4mg 30	£2.69	-2	£4.04	-12
Pantoprazole tabs 20mg 28	£0.41	±0	£0.62	-14
Paroxetine tabs 20mg 30	£0.89	-5	£1.26	-15
Pramipexole tabs 180µg 30	£1.25	-16	£2.74	-20
Pramipexole tabs 700µg 30	£4.50	-21	£9.43	-18

GlaxoSmithKline, in contrast, has the trade price of Seroxat 20mg at £12.69 for 30-tablet packs. The lowest-priced paroxetine offered a 93% discount to the brand price, while an average-priced generic offered 90%. In reimbursement terms, at a Drug Tariff price of £2.25, pharmacists' margins were 60% if they had bought the most keenly-priced generic and 44% at the average price.

Elsewhere, the prices of recent market entrants like pramipexole were continuing their decline, while the prices of others like citalopram were falling after recent rises (**Generics bulletin**, 22 April 2011, page 23). Glimepiride tablets could also be bought cheaper in May, as indicated by both Figures 1 and 2.

Price rises were few, but these were led by lofepramine 70mg with a 70% lift and mebeverine 135mg with 33% (see Figure 3). G

BIGGEST RISERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Lofepramine tabs 70mg 56	£3.58	+15	£6.94	+70
Mebeverine tabs 135mg 100	£3.58	+15	£9.14	+33
Metronidazole tabs 400mg 21	£0.37	-8	£1.01	+29
Naftidrofuryl caps 100mg 84	£2.99	-2	£6.47	+15
Oxazepam tabs 15mg 28	£2.75	-1	£4.04	+13
Nizatidine caps 150mg 30	£7.85	±0	£11.08	+12

2011 and 1-31 May 2011 in lowest and average UK trade prices of about 120 commonly-dispensed generics. The basket specifically excludes the 'fast movers' shown below, but includes other presentations of the same products. Each average price was calculated from at least 15 data points (Source - WaveData).

FAST MOVERS				
Product/Strength/Pack size	Lowest price	Change (%)	Average price	Change (%)
Pravastatin tabs 40mg 28	£1.27	-2	£1.57	-10
Ramipril caps 10mg 28	£0.55	±0	£0.75	+1
Risedronate tabs 35mg 4	£0.94	-21	£1.57	-1
Risperidone tabs 2mg 60	£0.84	+11	£1.42	-6
Sertraline tabs 100mg 28	£3.99	-13	£9.46	-25
Simvastatin tabs 20mg 28	£0.24	±0	£0.38	-7
Simvastatin tabs 40mg 28	£0.40	+3	£0.52	-3
Sumatriptan tabs 50mg 6	£0.68	±0	£0.95	-9
Tamsulosin caps 400µg 30	£0.85	-8	£1.43	+6
Terbinafine tabs 250mg 14	£0.99	-9	£1.43	+1
Topiramate tabs 50mg 60	£1.85	-3	£2.95	-11
Topiramate tabs 100mg 60	£2.65	+4	£4.10	-8
Venlafaxine tabs 37.5mg 56	£1.79	-1	£2.36	-3
Venlafaxine XL caps 75mg 28	£0.49	±0	£0.97	-2
Venlafaxine XL caps 150mg 28	£1.39	-4	£1.89	-5

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