

Generic Version of Transplant Drug Found to Perform as well as Brand

A recent study conducted by the University of Cincinnati found that patient outcomes were almost identical for generic and brand-name versions of tacrolimus, a drug used post-transplant to reduce the risk of organ rejection. With more affordable generics now on the market, the study took a closer look at the outcomes of what have often been referred to as narrow therapeutic index medications.

The study's lead investigator Rita Alloway, PharmD (a research professor of medicine and director of transplant clinical research at University of Cincinnati's Department of Internal Medicine) presented the study findings at the 2015 American Transplant Congress. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) funded the study, which tested the two generics most unlike Prograf (the brand-name for tacrolimus) to see if they became equally absorbed into the bodies of stable transplant patients. The study found that patients experienced comparable results regardless of the medication that was taken.

Nephrologists and patients are often reluctant to use generic transplant medications for fear that small differences could adversely impact a successful transplant. While this study shows promise, patients should still report any adverse reactions to the FDA. Also, please make sure that you do not change your medication regimen without first consulting your nephrologist.

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