

## Useful information for patients – „Aut idem“ field on the health insurance fund (Kasse) prescription

### Dear Patient,

In the world of medicinal drug products, there are many medicines from various manufacturers which—although they contain the same active ingredient—may go by different names. When your doctor gives you a prescription, he or she will either write down the name of the medication itself or only of the active ingredient. Every health insurance fund prescription includes an „aut idem“ field. The phrase „aut idem“ is a Latin technical term meaning „or the same“.



Your doctor has not crossed the „aut idem“ box on your medicine prescription. The doctor considers that a similar drug will be equally beneficial, thus allowing the pharmacist to give you a medication with the same active ingredient, but possibly with a different name, as it is cheaper.

This should save on costs within the healthcare sector, since there are sometimes significant price differences between the manufacturer and the individual drugs. The health insurance funds conclude discount agreements with individual manufacturers, so that the name of a drug with the same active ingredient can be different, depending under which health insurance fund you are insured.

In order for you to obtain the same medicinal quality even for a lower-cost medication, the drug must not only have the same active ingredient and potency, but also be comparable in packaging size and dosage form (such as tablets or capsules).



Your doctor has crossed the „aut idem“ box on your medicine prescription. The doctor may only do so in medically justified individual cases, when he or she considers that you need to take a certain medication. You will then receive the specifically prescribed drug, which the doctor deems to be medically beneficial, from the pharmacist.

### Specific medications

Even if the doctor does not see any medical necessity to mark the „aut idem“ box, as of 2011 patients have the right to receive their desired medication with the prescribed active ingredient from the pharmacy. However, when collecting the medication from the pharmacy, you must first pay the full pharmacy sales price. You will receive a copy of the prescription as well as proof of the amount paid for settlement of the billing with your health insurance.

With this prescription copy, you can reclaim a part of the costs from your health insurance. It is possible that the reimbursement amount from the health insurance will be low, as discounts and administrative costs may be deducted from the health insurance fund. You should therefore first check with your health insurance with regard to the reimbursement amounts before you decide on requesting a specific medication.