

Are brand-name drug prices really increasing? Depends on who you ask

By ACSH Staff — November 30, 2012

Are the prices of brand-name drugs really increasing, as claimed in a report published by the pharmacy benefits manager Express Scripts? [According to the report](#) [1], which tracked commonly used drugs from September 2011 until September 2012, the price of brand-name medications increased 13 percent and the price of generic drugs decreased by 22 percent. Express Scripts chief medical officer, Dr. Steven Miller, sees this drop in the price of generic drugs as low-hanging fruit for the country to save money on health care.

Yet, an article published in today's business section of *The New York Times* appears to be manipulating these statistics to serve an agenda. The Express Scripts report correctly notes that the reason for the increase in prices is due to the approval of new specialty medications during the first three quarters of 2012.

ACSH's Dr. Josh Bloom sums it up very clearly. It's a completely skewed article. These new, very expensive (and sometimes personalized) drugs are used mostly for cancer and can cost \$100K a year. This of course, is the real reason reason for the increase, since these will obviously raise the average price for all branded drugs.

You can read his op-ed in *Medical Progress Today* [here](#) [2].

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[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/29/business/cost-of-brand-name-prescription-medicines-soaring.html?_r=0

[2] <http://www.medicalprogresstoday.com/2012/11/the-new-york-times-on-drugs.php>