Many drugs cost a lot, but this one takes the cake

By ACSH Staff — April 2, 2013

In a new op-ed written by ACSH’s Dr. Josh Bloom, he discusses a new first-line therapy for multiple sclerosis, Biogen-Idec’s Tecfidera. This drug has been shown to significantly reduce the number of patients who relapse as well as reducing lesions in the brain.

But then Dr. Bloom goes on to discuss the caveat: The generic name for Tecfidera is dimethyl fumarate a very common chemical found in most organic chemistry labs. It costs almost nothing to make. Even at retail, you can buy a 100 gram bottle of the stuff from Sigma-Aldrich for $56. Biogen-Idec's price? Fifty four thousand dollars per year for a once-daily 480 mg capsule.

He of course realizes that the bulk of the cost of launching the drug comes from pre-clinical work and clinical trials, but fifty four thousand dollars a year for something that is cheaper to make than apple sauce simply sounds like way too much.

You can read the full op-ed [here](http://www.medicalprogresstoday.com/2013/04/ms-money-sucker.php).