



[RunawayRx](#), a project of the California Association of Health Plans, highlights noteworthy articles and information on the acceleration of prescription drug pricing.

The [New York Times](#) reports on drug company strategies to prevent patients from getting cheaper, equivalent generic products by extending the patent on expensive brand-name drugs. This is yet another example of dangerous pricing tactics used by the pharmaceutical industry to keep drug prices artificially high and highlights the need to bring transparency to prescription drug pricing.

Makers of Humira and Enbrel Using New Drug Patents to Delay Generic Versions

By Andrew Pollack | July 15, 2016

The New York Times

“The best-selling drugs Humira and Enbrel have a lot in common. They both use biotechnology to treat rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis and other autoimmune diseases. And they come with giant price tags approaching \$50,000 a year...

“The various developments show that six years after the Affordable Care Act cleared the way for biosimilars, as the generic versions of biotechnology drugs are called, progress has been slow. Only one biosimilar, a mimic of the white blood cell booster Neupogen, is available to patients.

“It’s a lost opportunity to reduce health care costs,” said Fiona M. Scott Morton, a professor at the Yale School of Management.

“By contrast, according to [a study she did](#), biosimilars have been available in Europe for years and have reduced costs for some drugs as much as 80 percent, though in many cases far less.”

“Now the two companies behind the competing drugs have found common ground in keeping those prices so high: They are deploying new patents to prevent patients and insurers from getting two essentially generic versions of the drugs for less money.”

Read More at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/16/business/makers-of-humira-and-enbrel-using-new-drug-patents-to-delay-generic-versions.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fhealth&r=0>

The California Association of Health Plans’ RunawayRx project sheds light on the acceleration of prescription drug pricing and how it impacts health care affordability, encouraging a route toward sustainable pricing. For more information, please visit www.RunawayRx.org or follow us on Twitter at [@Runaway_Rx](https://twitter.com/Runaway_Rx).