



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **ICYMI: David Lazarus: Walmart's low-priced insulin shows what a rational drug market should look like**

*In his column, David Lazarus illustrates how insulin prices, like so many other prescription drugs, represent a rigged drug market that favors Big Pharma over health care affordability*

**July 12, 2021, Sacramento, Calif.** – In a recent [Los Angeles Times column](#), David Lazarus points out the disturbing reality insulin users face as prices of the drug continue to soar, even as Walmart introduces a new private-label low-cost insulin. Using recent developments on insulin production as a case study, Lazarus shares that health care affordability advocates have long said that Big Pharma sets drug prices at “unreasonably high levels,” and that now, “thanks to Walmart, we know for sure: They do.” The price of Walmart’s insulin significantly undercuts competitors Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, and Sanofi, who generally sell their insulin for over \$300 a vial. Walmart’s new insulin vials will sell for only \$73, and the product is “largely identical to insulin sold by the others.”

The column comes as California legislators are supporting pharma-backed CA Assembly Bill 97, which will give Big Pharma even more power to raise insulin prices without any accountability, and with clear proof of a rigged insulin market, David asks “why do lawmakers tolerate what looks an awful lot like collusion and price gouging?”

**Other highlights from [the LA Times column](#) include:**

*“...if Walmart can profitably sell insulin at a fraction of current prices, why hasn’t anyone else done so before now?”*

*And if insulin can be mass-produced so cheaply, how has the drug industry gotten away with overcharging people for so long?*

*...They’re taking advantage of sick people, which is, to put it plainly, immoral.*

*“We know many people with diabetes struggle to manage the financial burden of this condition,” Dr. Cheryl Pegus, Walmart’s executive vice president of health and wellness, said in a statement. “We also know this is a condition that disproportionately impacts underserved populations.”*

*...it’s worth emphasizing that Walmart’s version of state-of-the-art insulin is being produced in conjunction with Novo Nordisk.*

*Which makes me wonder why Novo didn’t roll out a similarly priced insulin on its own. The company’s NovoLog insulin was introduced in the United States in 2000 at a cost of less than \$40 a vial.*

*It now lists for about \$350 a vial, according to the drug-pricing site GoodRX.*

*So what are we to think, that Novo Nordisk was unable to prevent the price of its insulin from rising by 775%, but somehow Walmart was able to wave a magic wand and cut the price by almost four-fifths?*



*...A vial of insulin is now more than 30,000% more expensive than the original cost of the patent.*

*...None of the experts I spoke with believed Walmart's unveiling of reasonably priced insulin will be followed by lower-priced alternatives to other drugs.*

*They said insulin was ripe for price disruption because it has attracted so much attention in recent years from feel-your-pain politicians."*

**To read David Lazarus' full column on Big Pharma's insulin price gouging, [click here](#).**

For more information on runaway drug pricing, visit [RunawayRx.org](http://RunawayRx.org).

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