

## India's Government Reduces Prices of 35 Essential Medicines



In a significant move aimed at making healthcare more affordable, the Indian government has announced a reduction in the retail prices of 35 essential medicines. The order, issued by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), covers a wide range of critical drugs, including those for anti-inflammatory, cardiovascular, and anti-diabetic conditions. This decision is expected to provide substantial relief to patients, especially those with chronic illnesses who depend on a regular supply of medication.

The price control order, which was notified by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, specifically targets certain fixed-dose combinations sold by major pharmaceutical companies. Among the key formulations affected are combinations of Aceclofenac, Paracetamol, and Trypsin Chymotrypsin, which are widely used for pain and inflammation. The price for one such tablet, for example, has been fixed at approximately Rs 13 for one manufacturer and Rs 15.01 for another.

Other crucial medicines included in the price cut are those for cardiovascular health, such as a tablet containing Atorvastatin 40 mg and Clopidogrel 75 mg, now priced at Rs 25.61. Newer oral anti-diabetic combinations like Empagliflozin, Sitagliptin, and Metformin have also been brought under the new price regime. Additionally, the order covers pediatric oral suspensions and critical medications like Cholecalciferol drops for vitamin D supplementation and Diclofenac Injection.

The NPPA, which operates under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, is responsible for setting and revising the prices of controlled drugs in India. The official order mandates that

retailers and dealers must prominently display the updated price lists. Non-compliance could result in penalties under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013, and the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, including the recovery of overcharged amounts with interest. Manufacturers are also required to comply with all statutory requirements, ensuring the new prices are immediately implemented. This action shows the government's commitment to regulating pharmaceutical prices to ensure essential drugs remain both available and affordable to the public.