Here’s One Way Pharma Keeps Generic Meds Off the Market

The FDA commissioner wants drugmakers to “end the shenanigans.”

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In an effort to prevent generic versions of drugs from competing with their brand-name (and more expensive) versions, pharmaceutical companies often simply refuse to provide the required samples of their meds to the companies that make generics. But as The New York Times reports, this practice is coming under fire from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and lawmakers.

Bolstered by Trump’s promise to lower the costs of drugs, FDA commissioner Scott Gottlieb, MD, said the pharmaceutical companies in questions must “end the shenanigans.”

The Federal Trade Commission is also looking into the issue, according to the Times.

What’s more, lawmakers support legislation that would ensure that manufacturers of generic drugs get the necessary samples, which could be a few thousand pills, in order to run the required tests.

Such a law could save the federal government $3.8 billion over a decade, according to estimates from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Needless to say, companies that make the brand-name drugs argue against these proposals. They say such legislation would endanger patients and incentivize lawyers to sue the brand-name drugmakers.

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