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India slashes prices of 54 essential drugs

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Singapore: With a view to make medicines for critical diseases more affordable, India's National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has slashed prices of 54 essential medicines by up to 55 percent. This list includes drugs that treat ailments like brain and beasrt cancer hypertension, diabetes , and other heart disorders.

In an interview with a leading daily, NPPA chairman Mr Bhupinder Singh, said, "The move is aims to bring down health expenditure and prices of commonly used drugs for critical diseases by expanding the span of price regulation to cover new drugs."

A notification to this effect was issued on Tuesday. Manufacturers, distributors and retailers have been asked to implement the ceiling prices immediately.

The new drugs that have been brought under price control include Trastuzumab injetion used in the treatment of breast cancer, Temozolomide for brain cancer and various medicines for heart disorders as well as hypertension, including Amlodopine, Ramipril and Clopidogrel.

This the second time in the last 15 days that the national regulatory body has reduced prices of drugs on the list. There are 875 drugs on the regulator's National List of Essential Medicines, 2015, after it was revised in December last year. So far, the price of 280 drugs on the list have been capped.