

Grocery chain to offer free antibiotics

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A St. Louis grocery chain began offering a limited supply of many generic brands of antibiotics free to patients with a doctors' prescription.

Schnucks market on Monday launched a program to offer a 21-day supply of more than 54 generic antibiotics free of charge at any of its nearly 100 in-store pharmacies, the Belleville (Ill.) News-Democrat reported Wednesday.

Michael Juergensmeyer, Schnucks vice president of pharmacy, said the program was a "long-term initiative" aimed at reducing consumer costs and bolstering more business.

"It's a great opportunity to extend our cost-reduction program," the News-Democrat quoted Juergensmeyer as saying.

The program includes such oral antibiotics as amoxicillin, erythromycin and penicillin. Juergensmeyer said the list might expand in the future.

Juergensmeyer told the News-Democrat the deal comes on the heels of similar programs in Florida and said he had phoned area doctors and hospitals asking them to recommend the program.

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