

## NOVARTIS TO LAYOFF 1,960



The Switzerland-based pharmaceutical company, Novartis, has announced cuts to their staff here in the US. The cuts are slated to be much larger in size than many had hoped, and a great number of them will affect workers in the state of New Jersey, though the layoffs are not confined to that state. The layoffs, which are part of a larger restructuring effort by the company, will impact about 1,960 workers currently. 330 of the jobs that are expected to be cut will come from the US headquarters, which is in the town of East Hanover, New Jersey. The rest of the 1,630 layoffs will come from the myriad of field positions that the company employs across the US, so the majority of the layoffs will be spread around the country, though they may not be spread equally. The restructuring that these layoffs are being attributed to the soon to expire patent on one of the top selling drugs made by the company, Diovan. For those of you not familiar with Diovan, it is a drug that is used to treat hypertension. The company is also attributing it to the slowing sales of a drug called Rasilez, which is used to treat the same condition. In a statement made to a reporter for [NJ.com](#) the company said the following about the layoffs, "It is not possible to provide an accurate figure regarding impact to New Jersey positions since we have not completed our assessment and notified associates. However, we expect the majority of the 330 headquarter positions will be NJ-based positions." Of course, these are not the first hints of a layoff at the company. In a statement made earlier by David Epstein, who is the division head of Novartis Pharmaceuticals, the following was said, "We recognize that the next two years will be challenging in the Pharmaceuticals Division and we are proactively making these changes to further focus our pipeline on the best opportunities and align our market position on our growth brands. These are difficult but necessary decisions that will free up resources to invest in the future of our business which we view as well suited to bring new valuable therapies to patients and payors." Of course, these are not the first layoffs to come to the pharmaceuticals industry. As you may recall in early December [AstraZeneca](#) let go of a number of workers, here is an excerpt: "AstraZeneca is getting ready to lay off about 1,150 of its workers. Those workers will come primarily from the company's U.S. sales force, though some of the workers who are slated to get a pink slip are in management roles. Most likely those managers will be the ones who supervise the sales staff. Without anyone to manage these positions are simply functionless. Interestingly enough this is not the first time in the recent past that AstraZeneca has taken to tightening its belt by letting go of U.S. based staffers. About two months ago the company undertook a much smaller layoff. That loss of about 400 jobs was blamed primarily on pressure from generic drug manufacturers who cut into the company's profits as the patents to drugs wear off and a cheaper version of the same chemical can be made by anyone. Those previous layoffs were centered in the state of Delaware, where the company is based. These new layoffs will be more spread out geographically."

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