

Biosimilar Medicines

A biosimilar biologic medicine may be a part of your treatment plan. This factsheet describes biosimilar medicine.

What are biologic medications?

Biologic medications come from a living organism. These often include blood, proteins, viruses, or cells. These medicines are more complicated for drug companies to make when compared to traditional medications.

What are biosimilars?

Biosimilars are biologic medications that are similar to an approved brand name medicine. Biosimilars are the same medicine and function the same way in your body as the brand name medicine.

Do biosimilars work as well?

Yes. Biosimilar medicine must still meet high standards set by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). They must work just as well as the brand name medicine.

Are biosimilars safe?

Yes. For a biosimilar medicine to be used in the United States it must be as safe as the brand name medicine.

Are biosimilar medicines taken differently?

No. You take biosimilar medicine the same way as the brand name medicine. They come in the same form and the same dose as the brand name medicine.

Will there be side effects for biosimilar medicine?

The side effects are the same for the biosimilar medicine as for the brand name medicine. It is hard to know what side effects you may have, but the type of side effect, severity, and the risks are the same. Talk to your treatment team about potential side effects you may experience.

Are biosimilars more expensive?

No. Biosimilars may cost less. This is why some insurers require us to use biosimilar medicines in place of brand name medicines.

Does insurance cover biosimilars?

Your treatment team will check your insurance coverage to see which medicine they will cover.

Where can I go for more information?

You can talk with your infusion team, provider, medication access coordinator or pharmacist with questions about your treatment.