

What are Biosimilars?



Biologic drug—a drug made from living organisms

Reference biologic or originator drug—the first version of a biologic drug to be made

Biosimilar drug—the next version of a biologic drug to be made after the reference biologic's patent expires



Biosimilars work in the same way as the reference biologic. They are built similarly and people can expect the same results from biosimilars.

Biosimilars are:



Safe



Effective



High Quality

Biosimilars are Tried and Tested:

Available and used for many years:

Biosimilars have been approved in Canada since 2009 and are used to treat diabetes, anemia, psoriasis, inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and other conditions.

Many people have successfully started or transitioned to a biosimilar:

Provinces and territories across Canada (and many countries around the world) have similar policies that support the use of biosimilars.

Approved by Health Canada using a rigorous process:

Drug studies and clinical trials must show that biosimilars are as effective and safe as reference biologics.

What stays the same:

- **How effective your medication is:**
Biosimilars are proven to work as well as reference biologics
- **How you feel taking your medication:**
There are no expected differences in side effects between the biosimilar and reference biologic
- **How you take your medication**
- **The dose of medication that you take**

What might be different:

- **How your medication looks:**
The package/container may be different
- **How you access services:**
The Patient Support Program will change
- **The clinic that administers your medication:**
If your medication is given to you as an IV infusion at a clinic, the location may change
- **How you store your medication:** There may be changes to where you keep it and how long it is safe at room temperature



Talk to your healthcare providers to help you transition to a biosimilar.

Ask questions about:

- the similarities and differences between your reference biologic and the biosimilar.
- what to expect from the transition.
- where to find resources about biosimilars.

**QUESTIONS FOR
A PHARMACIST?**

medSask
YOUR MEDICATION INFORMATION SERVICE

Contact medSask to have your biosimilar questions answered free of charge by a pharmacist. You can reach us by phone: 1 800 665 3784 or email: med.sask@usask.ca.

