

Understanding Your Options: Biosimilars and Generics

Whether you're starting a new therapy or considering a change, it's important to understand your options. If a biosimilar or generic version of your medication is available, your healthcare team may recommend trying one as an alternative to a brand-name drug. **Together, your prescriber and pharmacist may review your health needs and available options to help you find the best fit.**

Why Switch to a Biosimilar or Generic?

- ✓ **Better Access:** Biosimilars and generics may make important treatments more available and offer more options.
- ✓ **Lower Costs:** Many insurance plans cover both biosimilars and generics, making it easier for you to access more affordable treatment options.
- ✓ **Safe & Effective:** Biosimilars and generics are both FDA-approved and held to the same safety standards as brand-name drugs.

How can I get the most effective and affordable medication?

- **Ask questions.** Check with your provider or pharmacist to see if there are lower cost options for your prescription.
- **Check your prescription.** Ask your provider NOT TO MARK "DAW" (Dispense as Written) if you are open to using a biosimilar or generic.
- **Stay informed.** Take an active role in your care by learning about your options.



Know the Terms!

Brand-name drug: The original, FDA-approved medication that is used as a reference to create exact or near-copies.

Generic drug: An exact copy of a brand-name drug that is made from chemical compounds.

Biologic drug: A medication made from living sources. Biosimilars are also biologic drugs.

Biosimilar drug: A near copy of the original, biologic drug.

Interchangeable Biosimilar: Biosimilar that meets additional requirements and may be substituted for the reference biologic at the pharmacy (depending on state laws).

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Biosimilars and generics are similar...

- ✓ Often more affordable than brand-name drugs
- ✓ Approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- ✓ Proven to be just as safe and effective without meaningful difference

...but not the same!

What's the difference?



BIOSIMILARS

- ✓ Made up of living cells, proteins, and other organisms.
- ✓ Very similar, but not exactly the same as the original biologics.
- ✓ Offered in injection (syringe or pen) and infusion (IV) forms.
- ✓ Used to treat certain conditions such as chronic skin and bowel diseases, arthritis, diabetes, kidney conditions, macular degeneration, and some cancers.



Because biosimilars are made of living cells and have a very complex structure, they **cannot** be copied exactly.



GENERICS

- ✓ Made from chemical compounds.
- ✓ Exact copies of brand-name drugs.
- ✓ Offered in tablet, injectable, and infusion (IV) forms.
- ✓ Used to treat a wide range of conditions.



Because generics are made of chemical compounds and have a very simple structure, they **can** be copied exactly.

Want To Learn More?

Follow the links to the right to visit the FDA website for more information about biosimilars and generics:



Biosimilars

ahrx.co/biosimilar



Generics

ahrx.co/generic

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