

Information for patients

About Your Medicine: Biologics and Biosimilars



Pharmacy

You have been given this leaflet because your doctor has prescribed you a medicine called a biologic. Your healthcare team has carefully chosen the medicine that is best for you.

This leaflet explains:

- What a biologic medicine is.
- What a biosimilars medicine is.
- Why we sometimes change the brand.

If you have questions, your hospital team is happy to help.

What is a Biologic medicine?

Biologic medicines help people with conditions like:

- Arthritis
- Psoriasis
- Crohn's disease
- Some cancers
- Diabetes (like insulin)

These medicines are made from living cells. They are complex and made in special labs with strict safety checks. Because these medicines are complex, each batch might be slightly different but still safe and work well.

What is a Biosimilar?

Biosimilars are copies of biologic medicines. Other companies make them when the original company's patent ends.

Biosimilars:

- Work the same way.
- Meet the same safety and quality standards.
- Treat the same conditions.

Are biosimilars safe and effective?

Yes! Biosimilars have been used for many years. They are tested to make sure they work just as well and are just as safe as the original medicine.

Why do we use biosimilars?

Biosimilars cost less money, this helps the NHS treat more people with high-quality medicine.

How do we choose your medicine?

You and your hospital team will talk about the best treatment for you. This is called consent – it means you agree with the plan. All medicines used in the UK meet strict safety rules.

Why might your brand change?

- Biologic and biosimilar brands are both safe and effective so we may switch you to a different brand over time.
- Your healthcare team will tell you how your medicine works and asks if you are happy to start treatment.
- You will get the best value brand available.
- You might get different brands later, but we will let you know.
- You can ask which brand you are getting at any time.

If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print. Arrangements can also be made on request for it to be explained in your preferred language. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

Feedback

Tell us what you think of our patient information leaflet. Please send your comments to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

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Author: Rebecca Houston

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**The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt
Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**
Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 7AG

Tel: 01691 404000

Web: www.rjah.nhs.uk