

# Questions you may wish to ask your healthcare provider about biosimilars

Are you considering talking to your healthcare provider about biosimilars or has your healthcare provider talked to you already about biosimilars? We have put together some questions that might be helpful to be part of a conversation with your healthcare provider about biosimilars and brand name biologics.

**Some questions to consider asking your healthcare provider about biosimilars:**

- What is the biosimilar's name that could be taken instead of the brand name biologic? *(Note that medications have two names - one the manufacturer gives it which is also called the brand name and one that is its chemical name)*
- Will the biosimilar provide me with similar benefits and have the same potential risks as my current biologic (if you are currently on one)? If not, what might be different? How would I know if I have an adverse reaction (to a biosimilar or biologic)? If I do have an adverse reaction or if the biosimilar is not as effective, will I move back to my original biologic or switch to a new biologic?
- How will I take the biosimilar? If I take it by infusion, will I need to go to a different infusion centre than I do now? *You should note if the infusion centre is easier to get to or more difficult to get to than your current centre.* If I am going from infusion to subcutaneous injection (or vice versa), will I be provided with training and support?
- What is the dosing schedule – will it be the same as my current biologic?
- If I administer the biosimilar myself, are there any special storage requirements? Will I be provided with everything I need to administer the biosimilar?
- Is the patient support program different from the one I am currently on? If it is, how so?
- Is there a cost difference between the biosimilar(s) and brand name biologic? Will the biosimilar cost me anything?
- Should I expect to have to submit different forms for my biosimilar cost coverage approval, or will my rheumatologist take care of this?
- Will I need a new prescription to take to my pharmacy?
- Can I go back to the original medication I was on if the biosimilar does not work as well for me or if I experience different side effects?

**When your healthcare provider starts a conversation with you about biosimilars, you may also choose to ask these additional questions along with those that are listed above:**

- Why are you recommending this biosimilar for me?
- What if I don't want to change to the biosimilar? What are the consequences or options? Is there a cost to me if I choose to stay on the brand name biologic?
- What evidence is currently available on the use of biosimilars, specifically with respect to switching from a brand product?
- What is the back-up plan if I am not feeling as well on the biosimilar? Can I call your office? Come in for an appointment?
- Are there any potential risks or benefits to me if I switch?

*This information has been reviewed by CAPA's Medical Advisory Committee. This is not intended to be medical advice for your specific situation – please discuss your specific concerns with your own healthcare provider.*