



## **How to Talk to Your Doctor About Biosimilars**

If your doctor has recently introduced biosimilars as a treatment option, you may have questions. Since biosimilars are a fairly new and somewhat complicated area of treatment, most patients will need an introduction to what biosimilars are, how they are used, and what the risks/benefits are. In this document, you will find some suggestions for questions and topics to talk with your doctor about, so you can feel more comfortable deciding whether or not biosimilars are the right treatment option for you.

First, you may be wondering what biosimilars actually are. You may have heard of biologic medicines, and know there is a connection between the two, but what is the extent of that relationship? You can ask your doctor: how are biosimilars and biologics related, and what does it mean to be “biosimilar” in general?

Once you have a basic understanding of what biosimilars are and how they relate to biologics, you may be wondering how effective and how safe they are. As you will come to learn, biosimilars are approved through a rigorous testing and screening process through comparisons with another biologic medicine. To understand this process and the implications for your health and treatment, you can ask your doctor: “outcome-wise, can I expect any differences between the reference biologic and this biosimilar?” or “how can I be sure that this biosimilar will be as effective as the original biologic?” To understand the approval process, you can ask about how the FDA compares biosimilars to biologics, and why this process works.

If you are not convinced about the importance of biosimilars, or you would like to learn more about the bigger picture surrounding this type of medication, you can have a discussion with your doctor about the diverse benefits of biosimilars. The introduction of biosimilars brings with it more and earlier options for biologic treatments to patients. This affects the patient, healthcare providers, insurance coverage, and the healthcare system as a whole in various ways. Talk with your

doctor about the impact of biosimilars on all these parties, ask how biosimilars can reduce the cost of treatment and increase insurance coverage by adding to the pool of treatment options.

Another topic that is often relevant when prescribed a biosimilar is interchangeability. Biosimilars can be designated as interchangeable by the FDA, meaning they can be switched out for other biosimilars or biologics without a doctor's direct approval. You may want to be aware of this possibility and understand why it happens; if so, ask your doctor about how biosimilars become interchangeable, why they are sometimes exchanged, and/or if this is likely to occur in your situation.

By talking through these topics and questions with your health care provider, you will gain a thorough understanding of biosimilars and how they can benefit you. For additional information about biosimilars, visit [biosimilarsforum.org](https://www.biosimilarsforum.org) or check out our support blog posts at [info.healtheo360.com/patients](https://info.healtheo360.com/patients).