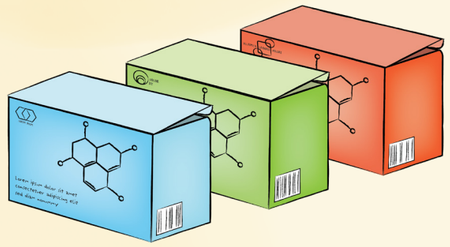
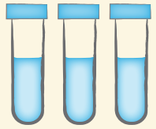
Biosimilar biologics in Canada



A biosimilar biologic is highly similar to its originator biologic

Biosimilar medicines are biologic treatment options for patients living with chronic, disabling and life-threatening diseases, including inflammatory arthritis, cancer, diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease, multiple sclerosis and psoriasis.

After an originator biologic's patent expires, other companies are allowed to produce their own biosimilar version of it. Because biosimilars are produced post-patent, biosimilar manufacturers do not have the same costs to bring the product to market and can therefore offer it at a lower price.[1]



Biosimilar biologics have the same active ingredients as the originator biologic and have been shown to be as safe and effective.

Since 2009, Health Canada has approved 50 biosimilars.

Biosimilars can improve access to high quality medicines and save public and private drug plans billions of dollars now and over the coming years

- Biologic medicines make up some of public and private drug plans' largest drug expenditures, accounting for $4.4 billion of public drug program spending (29.4% of total spending) in 2021.[2]
- British Columbia was the first province to implement biosimilars transition policy in 2019 and will save more than $227 million by 2024.
- Biosimilars savings can modernize "special access criteria," removing the need for patients to fail on older therapies before approving reimbursement for biosimilars.
- Biosimilar savings can be reinvested into public and private drug plan budgets making it possible to add new medications.
- Biosimilar savings can help improve non-medication elements of care that patients need, such as specialized nursing, counseling, physio- and occupational therapy.

Transitioning to a biosimilar biologic

"Medical transition" occurs when a patient, not doing well on their current originator or biosimilar, is transitioned to another originator or biosimilar to regain maximum disease control.

"Policy transition" occurs when a public or private drug plan's reimbursement policy change necessitate patients to move from their originator to its biosimilar, usually because it is significantly less expensive.

Under a transition policy, patients have a certain period to discuss transitioning from an originator to a biosimilar with their prescriber and get a prescription for the biosimilar to keep their drug plan coverage.

Through the successful introduction and implementation of biosimilar transition policies, Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, Alberta, New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan are using biosimilars savings to improve the sustainability of their drug plans by adding new medicine listings and boosting existing medication coverage.

Transitioning is safe and effective

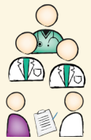
Transitioning from an originator to its biosimilar has been safely and effectively practiced over the past 17 years with hundreds of thousands of patients with autoimmune diseases in Europe and North America with no compromise to patient safety, effectiveness or quality of care.

According to Health Canada: "No differences are expected in efficacy and safety following a change in routine use between a biosimilar and its reference biologic drug in an authorized indication."[3]

Prior to transitioning, both physicians and their patients must be fully informed and have all available information about the biosimilar medicine, such as details about the reimbursement policy, patient support program information, including contact names and phone numbers.

Learn more about biosimilars

Visit the **Biosimilars•Exchange** – Canada's trusted source for timely news and information on biosimilar biologics.



Share facts about biosimilars

Share this biosimilars infographic with another patient, with your health care professional, your family or anyone else you know who is having a conversation about biosimilars as an advanced therapy option.

1. Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH): Biosimilar Drugs: Your Questions Answered
https://www.cadth.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/biosimilar_drugs_patient_en.pdf

2. Canadian Institute for Health Information. Prescribed Drug Spending in Canada, 2021. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2022. Infographic
https://www.cihi.ca/en/prescribed-drug-spending-in-canada

3. Health Canada Fact Sheet on Biosimilars: Switching
https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/biologics-radiopharmaceuticals-genetic-therapies/applications-submissions/guidance-documents/fact-sheet-biosimilars.html#a17