

Biologics and Biosimilars

Biologics

(MabThera: *Rituximab* Remicade: *Infliximab* Humira: *Adalimumab*)

Advanced medicines grown in living cells.

- More complex structures and manufacturing processes compared to the traditional chemical drugs.
- Used to treat certain conditions like cancers, diabetes and inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease and psoriasis.



Biosimilars

(Truxima: *Rituximab* Remsima: *Infliximab* Amgevita: *Adalimumab*)

Reproductions of reference biologics after patent of reference biologic has expired.

Efficacy & Safety

- ✓ Biosimilars are as safe and effective as the reference biologics.
- ✓ Must undergo extensive testing and quality assurance in order to be approved by local drug regulatory authorities.

Cost

- ✓ Greater cost savings compared to reference biologics.
- ✓ Listed in the Standard Drug List where Singaporeans and PRs get to enjoy subsidies.

FAQ

How do I know whether a biosimilar is safe?

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) requires evidence from in vitro assays as well as clinical studies to demonstrate that there are **no clinically meaningful differences** between biosimilar and its reference biologic before licensing it for use. Strict regulatory requirements also ensure that all biologics, whether biosimilar or reference biologic, are of good quality.



How can I start or switch to a biosimilar?

As with any other prescription medicines, please discuss with your doctor who will determine whether a biosimilar is clinically appropriate for your medical condition.

What should I do if I suspect that I have a side effect?

Biologics can be recognized by the body as "foreign" and may cause unwanted immune reactions like fever, skin rashes and swelling, joint pain etc. Please seek advice from your doctor or pharmacist if you suspect that you have a side effect from your medicine.



Contributed by Pharmacy, Allied Health Services

This brochure is produced for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek the advice of a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health or medical condition.

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