



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

**Helping Hand™**

*Health Education for Patients and Families*

## Biosimilar Medicines

Some complex diseases are treated with medicines called **biologic medicines** or 'biologics'. Biologics are made from living cells. Examples of biologics are proteins (called antibodies) that can bind to specific areas or targets in the body. Usually, biologics are given as an injection (shot) under the skin or an infusion into the vein (IV).

**Biosimilar medicines** are somewhat like the 'generic' version of the brand name biologic medicine. However, because biologics are so complex, it is impossible to make the medicines exactly the same. Biosimilars have been used in Europe since the early 2000s, and they have now been approved in the United States.

### How biosimilar medicines work

Many people may be concerned that the brand name biologic medicines works better than the biosimilar medicines. Biosimilars can only be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) if many tests have been done to show that they work the same and are as safe as the brand name biologic medicines.

### Giving biosimilar medicines

- The way you give a biosimilar medicine is exactly the same as the way you give the brand name biologic medicine.
- Dosing for biosimilars will also be the same as it is with biologics.

### Why we use biosimilar medicines

Biosimilar medicines are the preferred medicines of your insurance provider. They are expected to be 15 to 30 percent less expensive than brand name biologics. This saves you and the insurance company money. There are assistance programs available for patients who have commercial insurance to help keep out-of-pocket costs low.