

Are biosimilars safe and effective?

Yes. Health Canada approves biosimilars through an extensive testing process that shows that there are no meaningful differences in safety and effectiveness between the biosimilar and the originator biologic drug.

Did you know?

Biosimilars first came to the market in Canada in 2009. Since then, Health Canada has approved more than 30 biosimilars.

Tens of thousands of patients in Canada have successfully transitioned to biosimilars.

"Patients and health care providers can have confidence that biosimilars are effective and safe for each of their authorized indications."

- Health Canada

For more information:

NLPDP Biosimilar Initiative

Webpage: www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/prescription/biosimilars/

Biosimilar biologic drugs in Canada: Fact Sheet:

www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/migration/hc-sc/dhp-mps/alt_formats/pdf/brgtherap/applic-demande/guides/Fact-Sheet-EN-2019-08-23.pdf

Biosimilar Drugs:Your Questions Answered:

www.cadth.ca/biosimilar-drugs

NLPDP BIOSIMILARS Initiative

Newfoundland & Labrador
Prescription Drug Program
(NLPDP)



What is a biologic?

Drugs made from living organisms, or their cells, are commonly referred to as “biologics”. The first biologic brand to the market for a particular drug is known as the **originator** drug. Biologic drugs are used to treat various medical conditions.

What is a biosimilar?

Biosimilars are highly similar versions of the originator biologic drug.

They treat the same conditions as the originator brand but are more affordable.

What is the NLPDP Biosimilars Initiative?

Started in Spring 2023, individuals with NLPDP coverage for select originator biologics* have to transition to a biosimilar within a 12 month transition period to maintain NLPDP coverage.

As new biosimilars come to market they will be added to the Biosimilars Initiative. Patients are notified by letter if they are on an originator biologic drug that will be required to transition to a biosimilar.

*For more information about originator biologics included and transition periods please visit: www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/prescription/biosimilars/

How do I transition to a biosimilar?

Your prescriber can assist you with transitioning to a biosimilar. They can answer your questions and write a prescription for the biosimilar. If you require a special authorization for your medication, the transition can occur at the time of renewal. Be sure to see your prescriber before the end of your transition period, to have your biosimilar prescribed.

If you are using an **Insulin** included in the Biosimilars Initiative, your pharmacist may be able to assist your transition to biosimilar insulin. If not, you will need to see your prescriber for a new prescription before the end of your transition period.