

UNDERSTANDING OSTEOPOROSIS MEDICATIONS: **BIOLOGICS & BIOSIMILARS**

Osteoporosis biosimilar medications may be available as part of your treatment plan. Medications are made in different ways and the terminology can be confusing. Learn more below and consult with your healthcare provider about your options.



WHAT IS A **BIOLOGIC?**

Many medications, such as aspirin, are made from chemicals. Biologic medications, such as insulin, are made from living sources that use cells or tissue (such as yeast, bacteria, or animal cells). The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves biologic medications to treat many different chronic conditions, including osteoporosis.

WHAT IS A **BIOSIMILAR MEDICATION?**

Biosimilars are a type of FDA-approved medication that are very similar in structure to an original biologic medication.

- When using living sources, it is natural to have some slight variations between batches of medications.
- Like loaves of bread made from the same recipe, no loaf is exactly the same but they are all the same type of bread. The same is true of biologics.
- This means that a biosimilar cannot be an identical copy of the original biologic drug.
- There is no difference in the safety or effectiveness of biosimilars and the original biologic.
- Biosimilars drugs are made by a different manufacturer and will have different names than the original biologic drug.

WHAT ABOUT **GENERIC MEDICATIONS?**

A biosimilar medication is an equal substitute for its original biologic and can be used to treat the same disease, such as osteoporosis.

Generic medications are made by chemicals to copy a brand name medication. Biosimilars are tested and compared to an original biologic in studies. Similarly, generic medications are tested and compared to brand name medications in studies. In both cases, the original brand name medications have already been approved by the FDA.



ARE BIOSIMILARS THE SAME AS GENERIC MEDICATIONS?

Although biosimilars and generics are alike there are some important differences:

SIMILARITIES

- ✓ Both generics and biosimilars are FDA-approved medicines.
- ✓ The FDA takes the same precautions to ensure the safety and effectiveness of biosimilars as it does with all other medications
- ✓ They are just as safe and effective as the products they're compared to.

DIFFERENCES

- ✗ Generics can be easier to copy exactly because their active ingredients tend to be smaller and simpler.
- ✗ Biosimilars can't be considered "generics," because they aren't manufactured as traditional pharmaceuticals.
- ✗ Biologics cannot be copied exactly, even between batches of the same brand, because they are made from living sources and can contain many slight variations.

HOW ARE BIOSIMILAR MEDICATIONS APPROVED FOR SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS TO TREAT OSTEOPOROSIS?



Patients and health care providers can feel confident when prescribing or taking a biosimilar medication for their condition.



The FDA carefully reviews data, studies and tests to decide if a biosimilar meets its high standards for approval.



The FDA expects to approve more biosimilars in the future.



ARE BIOSIMILARS COVERED BY INSURANCE?

Biosimilars were established by the FDA to improve patient access and affordability. In some instances, a biosimilar may cost less. Biosimilars may offer patients additional treatment options. Some insurance companies may cover the cost, or part of the cost, of a biosimilar. If a biosimilar is an osteoporosis treatment option for you, it's important to talk to your insurance company about coverage.

DID YOU KNOW?



1 Biosimilars are TESTED AND APPROVED BY THE FDA FOR SAFETY AND QUALITY

2 They are designed to be AS EFFECTIVE AS THE ORIGINAL DRUG

3 They work THE SAME WAY IN THE BODY

4 They are made in the SAME DOSE AND STRENGTH

5 They have the SAME POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS