



A biologic strategy built to save



As costs for complex new biologic specialty medications continue to soar, biosimilars are expected to create a more competitive pricing environment among drug manufacturers that can help drive down drug costs.

UnitedHealthcare strives to provide coverage for biosimilars when possible to ensure a robust pipeline of future products.

Here's why:

They are made differently

Biologics and biosimilars are made from living cells.



Brand and generic medications
Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid)



small molecule, easy to make



Biologic and biosimilar medications
Biologically engineered antibody



large molecule, difficult to make

They are produced differently¹



Conventional drugs can be simply mass-produced



Biologics and biosimilars require sophisticated production processes and are more difficult to manufacture

They are expensive to produce

Biologics contain the same active ingredient as original biologic medications but are still as expensive to produce. So they don't drive savings the way generics do—they compete like brand medications.



Original biologic medications



Biosimilar medications

Management strategies

At UnitedHealthcare, we offer management strategies designed to support patient health at the lowest net cost. Each innovator (original biologic) and its biosimilar are evaluated one by one and when financially supportable, we prefer the biosimilar.

Drug	Category	Innovator brand(s)	Biosimilar brand(s) ²	Administration method	Preferred product ³
Filgrastim	Cancer support	Granix® Neupogen®	Nivestym® Releuko® Zarxio®	Physician administered or self-injected	Zarxio Preferred product for both the pharmacy and medical benefits
Pegfilgrastim	Cancer support	Neulasta®	Fulphila® Fylneta® Nyvepria™ Stimufend® Udenyca® Ziextenzo®	Physician administered or self-injected	Neulasta Ziextenzo Preferred products for both the pharmacy and medical benefits
Infliximab	Inflammatory conditions	Remicade®	Avsola™ Inflectra® Renflexis®	Physician administered	Avsola Inflectra Preferred products for the medical benefit
Epoetin alfa	Anemia	Epogen® Procrit®	Retacrit®	Physician administered or self-injected	Retacrit Preferred product for both the pharmacy and medical benefits
Bevacizumab	Cancer	Avastin®	Almsys® Mvasi™ Zirabev®	Physician administered	Mvasi Preferred product for the medical benefit
Trastuzumab	Cancer	Herceptin®	Herzuma® Kanjinti® Ogivri® Ontruzant® Trazimera™	Physician administered	Kanjinti Trazimera Preferred products for the medical benefit
Rituximab	Cancer	Rituxan®	Ruxience® Truxima® Riabni™	Physician administered	Ruxience Truxima Preferred products for the medical benefit
Semglee	Diabetes	Lantus®	Semglee® Rezvoglar®	Self-injected	Lantus Preferred product for the pharmacy benefit
Ranibizumab	Macular Degeneration	Lucentis® ⁴	Byooviz® ⁴ Cimerli® ⁴	Physician administered	Lucentis ⁴ Preferred product strategy under review
Adalimumab	Inflammatory conditions	Humira®	Amjevita® (after 1/31/23)	Self-injected	Humira Amjevita (after 1/31/23) Preferred products for the pharmacy benefit



Estimated client savings up to

60%

by implementing our biosimilar management strategies⁵

Savings may vary. Average savings is 41%*

Contact your UnitedHealthcare representative to learn more about management strategies for biosimilars



1. Grabowski HG, Guha R, Salgado M. Regulatory and Cost Barriers Are Likely To Limit Biosimilar Development And Expected Savings In the Near Future. Health Affairs. 2014; 33(6): 1048-57.
 2. Though other biosimilars have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration, those listed here are the only ones that have been launched in the market. We will develop management strategies as more biosimilars launch.
 3. UnitedHealthcare uses utilization management strategies or exclusions to prefer products.
 4. Drug is on UnitedHealthcare Review at Launch list and evaluation is ongoing.
 5. UnitedHealthcare 2020 commercial book of business data. Savings may vary.
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