Biosimilars: An Antidote for High Prices

Millions of Americans struggle to pay astronomical drug prices.

Patients with chronic or life-threatening conditions often require complex and expensive “biologic” drugs.

The price can force patients to choose between medication and other expenses.

In fact, nearly 1/4 of cancer patients skip treatments because they can’t afford their drugs.¹

But “biosimilars” can provide relief.

Biosimilars are FDA-approved copycat versions of complex biologic drugs.

Consumers who use an immunosuppresive drug to treat rheumatoid arthritis could save up to 35% using a biosimilar.

Biologic

Remicade®

$1167³

Biosimilar

Renflexis®

$753⁴

Biosimilars can cost up to 35-43% less than a branded biologic product.⁵

Rand Corporation estimates biosimilars could save American consumers more than $54 billion over the next 10 years.⁶

Success overseas has shown the impact of biosimilars. European consumers have access to 36 biosimilars⁷, leading to a competitive market that has helped lower prices.

The FDA has approved 12 biosimilars⁸, but anti-competitive business practices mean consumers can only access 5 biosimilars in the United States.⁹

2. Ibid.
3. Based on Medi-Span® Price Rx® data as of August 2018. Figures reflect list price. Note: price modification will alter the values reflected.
4. Ibid.
Biosimilars are safe and less expensive alternatives to brand-name biologic drugs.

Yet many people don’t understand what biosimilars are or how they reduce costs.

More than 1/3 of doctors are not aware biosimilars are as effective and nearly 1/2 of doctors are not aware biosimilars are as safe.10

ACHP health plans educate doctors and patients about these new therapies.

Our members collaborate with physicians and pharmacists, implementing strategies to facilitate biosimilar adoption.

Promising results include:

Kaiser Permanente
In 2016
98.1%
of Kaiser Permanente patients using the biologic Neupogen® successfully switched to the biosimilar Zarxio®

Dean Health Plan
By switching patients from the biologic Remicade® to the biosimilar Renflexis®
Dean Health Plan projects annual savings of $650,000

Security Health Plan
With a rebate, Granix® costs Security Health Plan 60% less than brand name Neupogen®
This amounts to $500 saved for every dose

11. Ibid.