

Biosimilar naming conventions

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With a formal policy still not in place, pharmacists responding to a survey offered insight into how members of the profession feel about naming conventions for biosimilars. The possibilities include attaching a designated suffix to a nonproprietary base, combining a prefix or unique brand name with a nonproprietary base, or using a nonproprietary base itself. Among 781 poll-takers, the clear favorite was the nonproprietary proper name with a designated suffix. However, when asked about their level of confidence when dispensing a biosimilar instead of the reference biologic, pharmacists were more sure when the products had the same nonproprietary name in common. The poll—funded by the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy which, along with the Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association, accounted for the study participants—also probed attitudes regarding regulations requiring pharmacists to submit postdispense notifications. The results suggest the obligations placed on pharmacists could deter some from dispensing interchangeable biologics, although this hesitance would be mitigated if the biologics were to share the same nonproprietary name as the reference biologic.

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