

Study: Generic biologics not much cheaper

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A U.S. study has determined generic versions of a class of medicines called "biologics" would not be significantly cheaper than brand-name drugs.

Biologics are drugs, vaccines and other medicines produced by living cells in controlled circumstances, but there is no established process for the review and approval of generic versions of biologic products, such as insulin.

"Congress and the (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) are currently addressing this issue and developing a process for the oversight of generic biologics, partially in hopes of generating significant cost savings for consumers and insurers," said Duke University Professor Kevin Schulman. "However, our research indicates that any savings to be expected from the addition of generic biologics to the marketplace will be significantly less than the savings generally available from generic pharmaceuticals."

The study, which also included Professors David Ridley and Henry Grabowski as authors, is to be published in the journal *Managerial and Decision Economics*.

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