

# Subjective complaints may cause patients to stop treatment after switching to a biosimilar

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A biosimilar is a biological medicine that shows no clinically meaningful differences with another already approved biological medicine (the 'reference medicine'). A new study in *Arthritis & Rheumatology* found that one-quarter of patients with rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, or ankylosing spondylitis who switched from reference infliximab to biosimilar infliximab (called CT-P13) stopped taking CT-P13 during six months follow-up, mainly due to subjective health complaints.

The substantial discontinuation rate of CT-P13 after open-label transitioning might be explained by the awareness of clinicians and patients of the transition. This awareness might induce negative expectations about transitioning to a biosimilar, resulting in negative symptoms during treatment (nocebo effect) and/or incorrect causal attributions.

"As a result, communication between clinicians and patients seems to be the determining factor of the success of transitioning to a biosimilar in daily practice", said lead author Dr. Lieke Tweehuysen, of Sint Maartenskliniek, in the Netherlands.

**More information:** Lieke Tweehuysen et al, Subjective Complaints as Main Reason for Biosimilar Discontinuation after Open Label Transitioning from Originator to Biosimilar Infliximab, *Arthritis & Rheumatology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1002/art.40324](https://doi.org/10.1002/art.40324)

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