Study examines safety and effectiveness of infliximab biosimilar in patients with inflammatory bowel disease

December 6 2017

Biosimilars are biologic agents that highly similar to original biomedical medications (originators), but are much cheaper. A new study in Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics found no differences in drug levels and disease activity between infliximab originator and an infliximab biosimilar in patients with inflammatory bowel disease, indicating that this biosimilar is indeed safe and effective.

After switching to an infliximab biosimilar, 26 percent of patients discontinued therapy within 12 months. This high rate of discontinuation was likely due to elective withdrawal or subjective disease worsening.

"Switching to biosimilars and performing therapeutic drug monitoring as part of routine care can optimize infliximab therapy of inflammatory bowel disease efficiently and make it more cost-effective," said senior author Dr. Luc Derijks, of the Máxima Medical Center, in The Netherlands.

More information: E. M. H. Schmitz et al. Switching from infliximab innovator to biosimilar in patients with inflammatory bowel disease: a 12-month multicentre observational prospective cohort study, *Alimentary Pharmacology & Therapeutics* (2017). DOI: 10.1111/apt.14453