Biologic drugs or “biologics” have been game-changers for treating many types of disease, including breast cancer. Biosimilars are drugs that are "highly similar" to an existing biologic drug. Here are a few facts about biosimilars.

01 Biologics are Not New
- Biologics have been around since the early 1900s.
- Common biologics include vaccines and insulin.

02 Biologics are Alive
- Biologics are made in or from living things.
- They can come from things such as yeast, bacteria, plant or animal cells.

03 Biologics are Complex
- The manufacturing process for biologics can take years to complete.
- Hundreds of critical tests may be completed during the manufacturing process.

04 Biologics Offer Targeted Treatment for Breast Cancer
- Trastuzumab (known as Herceptin®) is a commonly prescribed targeted treatment for HER2-positive breast cancer.
- Herceptin is used to help slow or stop the cancer cells from growing.

05 Biosimilars are Not Generics
- Generic drugs are chemical copies of an original brand-named drug.
- Biosimilars are "highly similar" or "generic-like" to an original biologic drug. Because biologics are made in or from living things, exact replicas are not possible.

06 Biosimilars are Safe and Effective
- Biosimilars must be FDA-approved.
- There’s no “clinically meaningful” difference in safety, purity or potency (strength).

07 Biosimilars for Breast Cancer are in Market
- The FDA has approved several biosimilars for Herceptin.
- Biosimilars are currently an option used in supportive care to manage side effects from cancer treatment.

08 Biosimilars May Provide More Options
- The availability of biosimilars may provide more options for health care teams.

09 Biosimilars May Reduce Costs
- Due to the complex manufacturing process required, biosimilars are costly to produce.
- Over time, biosimilars may lower the cost of health care as competition increases.

10 Communication is Important
- Ask your doctor the names of the medications you are taking.
- Ask your doctor any questions you may have about your treatment.

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