

Biologics and biosimilars for people with rheumatoid arthritis

Population	People with rheumatoid arthritis
Intervention/Exposure	Biologics in prevention of total joint replacement surgery
Comparator	Usual standard of care
Outcomes	QoL; need for total joint replacement surgery

Interview Details:

Why did you choose this topic and why is it important to you?

- Lived experience with rheumatoid arthritis with multiple total joint replacements and fusions to replace joints damaged by rheumatoid arthritis, prior to the first biologic drug being approved in Canada.
 - Feel that if they had access to biologic drugs sooner, they could have avoided surgeries.
- Ministries of Health and Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) continuously question need to cover biologics for inflammatory arthritis, due to costs.
 - Biologics may actually be cost-effective if they prevent joint damage and the need for total joint replacement.
 - The rise in cheaper alternatives may also be cost-saving.
- Current treatment for rheumatoid arthritis needs to be timelier to prevent joint damage and disability.

What do you hope to learn from researching this topic?

- Have biologics prevented the need for total joint replacement for people with rheumatoid arthritis?
 - Explore trends (number of total joint replacements before and after biologics were made available) in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. Exclude total joint replacements due to osteoarthritis (only include diagnoses of inflammatory arthritis).

Who needs to know about the findings?

- Governmental bodies (e.g., CADTH, Health Canada)
- Healthcare professionals (e.g., orthopedic surgeons, rheumatologists)
- Private insurers
- Patients

Anything else you would like to share?

- There is potential for an economic evaluation of biologics and biosimilars (although there is current work being done on the economics of biosimilars).

Feasibility Assessment Results

Summary:

No reviews were identified during the scoping literature search.

Conclusion:

There is scope to conduct further research in this area.