

Notice from the Executive Officer: Funding of tocilizumab under the Ontario Drug Benefit Program

May 30, 2025

Tyenne® (tocilizumab) is approved by Health Canada as a biosimilar version of Actemra® (tocilizumab). The funding of these products is being aligned with the funding of other biosimilars under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program's new start policy, which requires recipients initiating treatment on a biologic drug to start on a biosimilar. In accordance with the New Start Rule, ODB program recipients who are treatment naïve to Actemra® will only receive coverage for the biosimilar version, provided they meet the applicable Limited Use (LU) criteria for the product.

Biosimilars have similar efficacy and safety as originator biologics and present an opportunity to achieve better value for money for biologic drugs that will help to support the long-term sustainability and accessibility of Ontario's public drug program.

As of the effective date of the May 2025 update to the ODB Formulary/Comparative Drug Index (Formulary), changes to the funding of tocilizumab under the ODB Program will be as follows:

Tyenne® (tocilizumab) will be listed on the Formulary as a Limited Use (LU) benefit for the treatment of the following indications in accordance with the criteria set out on the Formulary:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)
- Polyarticular Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (pJIA)
- Systemic Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (sJIA)
- Giant Cell Arteritis (GCA)

Prescribers should be informed and stay current with official indications for drug products in accordance with Health Canada's approved product monograph.

Details of the LU criteria will also be posted in the May 2025 Formulary update, which can be found on the ministry's website at:

[Formulary / Comparative Drug Index \(CDI\) Edition 43 | Ontario Drug Benefit \(ODB\) Formulary / Comparative Drug Index \(CDI\) and Monthly Formulary Updates | ontario.ca](#)

For up-to-date list of eligible ODB funded biosimilars please refer to the [ODB Formulary](#).

To further inform healthcare providers and patients, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document for reference purposes is also available.

Additional information:

For pharmacies: Please call ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

For all other health care providers and the public:

Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282.