

BIOLOGIC THERAPY

What are biologics? Who benefits from these drugs?

Biologic therapy is defined as treatment with substances that are extracted from living organisms or artificially synthesized by using technologies such as genetic engineering.

Biologic drugs inhibit the body's self-defense response that causes these conditions by targeting the chemical substance associated with the disease. Biologic agents lead to the improvement of short- and long-term outcomes in patients affected by conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and systemic lupus erythematosus.



What are the benefits of biologics for patients?

Patients affected by conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and systemic lupus erythematosus can benefit immensely from the by use of biologic therapy. Biologics target the substances that activate the immune response and interfere with the immunological reaction and control the worsening of the disease. Some of the benefits for patients include

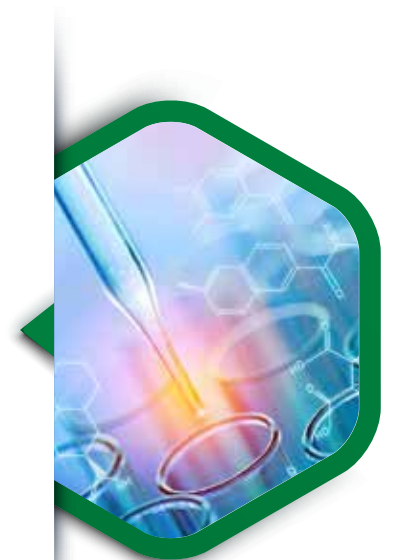
- Reduced pain
- Improved function
- Faster return to normal activities

Is any screening test recommended before initiating biologic therapy?

Biological agents are considered safe. However, proper selection and monitoring of the patient are important in achieving the desired benefits.

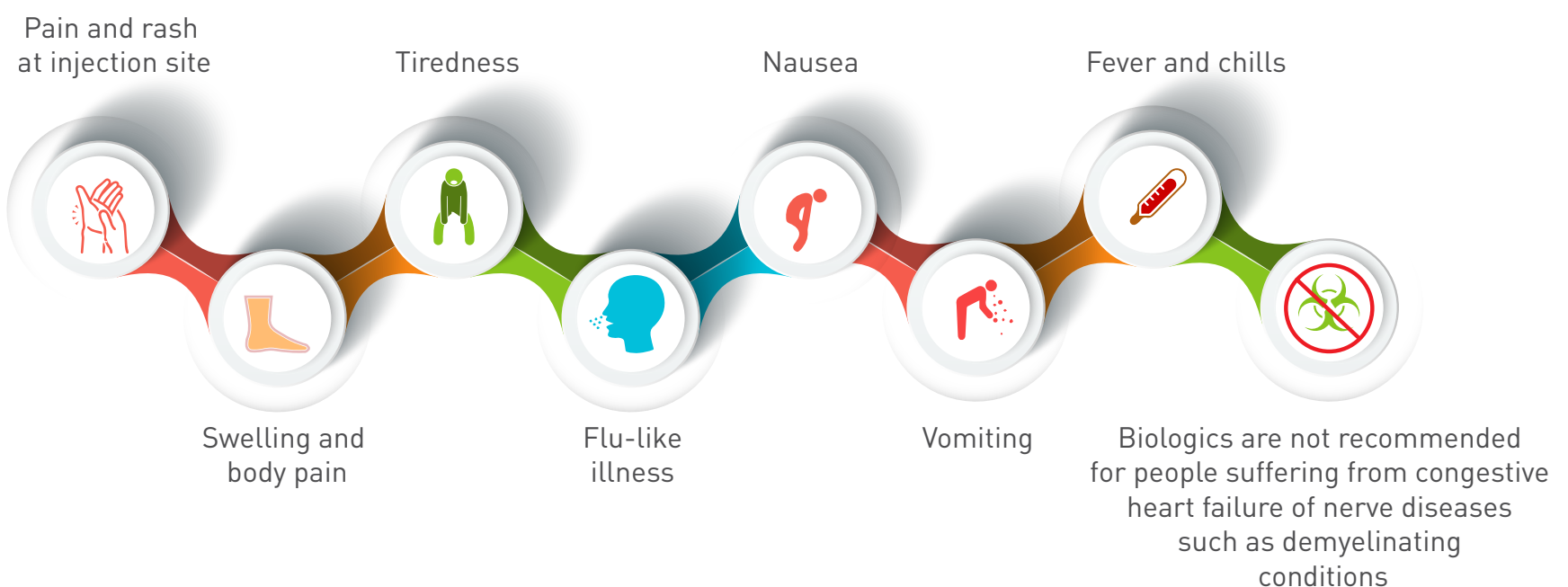
Some of the laboratory tests to be performed before starting biologic therapy include

- Complete blood count
- Liver function tests
- Screening for anti-nuclear antibody
- Screening for tuberculosis
- Screening for human immunodeficiency virus infection
- Pregnancy test for women of child-bearing age



What are the possible side-effects associated with biologics?

Biologic drugs are administered as injections into the veins. They may cause the below mentioned side-effects



How can patients cope with the side effects of biologics?

Most side effects can be managed by the doctor through the administration of appropriate medications. In case, the symptoms persist or do not reduce, the doctor may advise discontinuation of therapy.

