

BIOLOGICS & HS: Everything you want and need to know

What is a biologic?

Biological medicines (biologics) have been an important tool in healthcare for more than 100 years. Millions of patients have benefited from them.

Biologics are created from materials that are usually made by cells in living things. Many of those materials are like the human immune system, our body's defense system that fights off viruses and other germs that make us sick. Our body is used to materials like this. They can move through our bodies easily

Most biologics are proteins. If they are swallowed, stomach acids break them down. That's why instead of taking them by mouth, they are usually given by home injection or infusion. (An infusion is when doctors put the medicine directly into the body.)

What should I expect from using a biologic to treat HS?

It usually takes two weeks to six months to start feeling better. The time depends on the biologic you take and the severity of your HS.

HS can cause skin damage (like scarring) and impact your quality of life. This can cause long-lasting problems. That's why it's important to start an effective treatment before it gets worse.

What are considerations for and benefits of biologics?

Considerations:	Benefits:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential side effects • administration via injection • affordability • other existing conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • controlling and preventing the worsening of HS • improving symptoms • preventing need for surgery and future complications • generally reversible side effects

What should I do if a biologic isn't working for me?

Think about switching to a different biologic or adding a medicine to the biologic you're already taking. There aren't many issues combining biologics with common medicines.

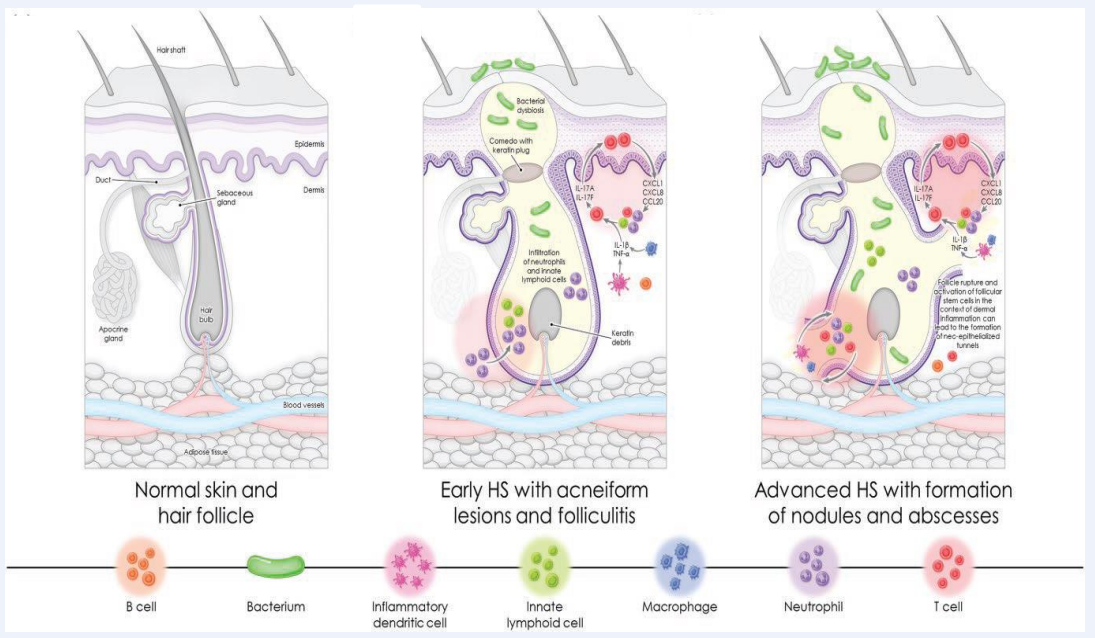
For example, you can use oral antibiotics, metformin, spironolactone, colchicine, and others along with a biologic.

If you're thinking about surgery for your HS, you might still use biologics. **Stopping biologics before surgery can make your HS worse. It is important to discuss this with your doctor.**

If you are considering using a biologic, talk with your doctor about:

- Do you think a biologic could be right for me?:
- My HS symptoms:
- My biologic concerns:
- What are the potential side effects?:
- Should we add a biologic to my existing treatments?:

HS development due to body's defense system (inflammatory process)



Who are biologics for?

People with different health conditions may use biologics to help them feel better; HS is one of these conditions. Biologics for HS block things in the body that cause inflammation. **This can make HS less active, help with symptoms, and reduce scarring.**

Most biologics for HS have been studied in patients with "moderate-to-severe" HS. Not every biologic works for everyone. For example:

- TNF-inhibitors are avoided in patients with heart failure and some other conditions
- IL-17 inhibitors should not be used in patients with history of inflammatory bowel disease

What is TNF and IL-17? Different biologics target different things. If one biologic doesn't work for you, another one may help instead. They are doing a similar thing in a slightly different way.