Small-molecule Medicines
Yes. Because they are produced through a chemical process, they can be copied exactly. Small-molecule medicines can be replicated as generics of an original brand-name medicines, where they share the exact same active ingredient and are therefore bioequivalent.

Large-molecule Medicines (Biologics)
No. Because they are derived from living cells, biologics can never be exactly reproduced or copied like generics. However, a biosimilar version can be produced to be “highly similar” to the original in terms of safety, purity, and potency, and used to treat the same illness or condition as the original.

BIOLOGICS: WHAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT?
With more biologic medicines becoming available to treat a broad range of health conditions, it’s important to understand how these complex, “large-molecule” medicines differ from small-molecule medicines people may be more familiar with.
Some biologics can be 200-1,000x larger than small-molecule medicines, like aspirin.\(^3\)

**Monoclonal antibody molecular breakdown**

150,000 Da*

**Aspirin molecular breakdown**

180 Da*

*Da: Short for “Daltons”

The standard molecular unit of measurement for any kind of matter

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