



Information about Cancer Clinical Trials

What are cancer clinical trials and why are they needed?

Clinical trials are studies involving people that test the safety and effectiveness of new treatments. They are the final portion of a research process that begins in the laboratory and ends with studies on humans. Clinical trials are necessary to find promising new ways to deal with and treat cancer and its effects.

What are the types of cancer clinical trials?

Clinical trials look at questions about preventing, finding, and treating cancer. Other clinical trials look at the best way to manage the symptoms of cancer or treatment. Most commonly, clinical trials focus on treatments such as surgery, radiation therapy, or new drugs.

Who can be on a clinical trial?

Each clinical trial is designed for a specific group of people. A clinical trial may include people with a certain type of cancer, who have had a certain treatment in the past, who are of a certain age group, and who do not have health conditions that would put them at increased risk. The type of people who can go on a specific clinical trial is determined when the clinical trial is developed.

Are cancer clinical trials safe?

Because not a lot is known about the safety and effectiveness of the treatments being studied, extra precautions are taken to protect people who participate in clinical trials. To help with this, all clinical trials are reviewed by a committee called an institutional review board (IRB). It is the job of the IRB to make sure that the risks are not too high and the potential benefits worthwhile.

What do I need to know before I make a decision about going on a clinical trial?

Before you agree to participate, the research team (doctor and nurses) will explain the clinical trial to you, including

- Why the clinical trial is being done
- What the treatment will involve
- What tests and procedures will be done
- What the risks are, including anticipated side effects as well as any potential benefits.

It is your right to decide whether or not to participate in a clinical trial. You should not feel like you are being pressured. And if you go on a clinical trial, you have the right to stop at any time without consequences.

Where can I find more information about clinical trials?

To find out more about clinical trials, you can call 1-800-4CANCER or go to these websites:

- National Cancer Institute: www.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learningabout
- American Cancer Society: <http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/clinical-trials.html>
- Cancer.Net: <https://www.cancer.net/research-and-advocacy/clinical-trials>