What is a clinical trial?
Clinical trials are research studies that try to answer a specific question. Some clinical trials assess the safety and effectiveness of new screening tools or treatments. Other clinical trials evaluate if the new treatment is more effective than the existing treatment for the disease.

Why should you participate in a clinical trial?
All advances in cancer care have occurred because people are willing to take part in clinical trials. Clinical trials have benefits and risks.

Some of the benefits include:
- You may receive a treatment that is not widely available. The treatment may be safer and work better than the current treatment recommendation.
- You will have an enhanced care team specifically monitoring your care and well-being.
- You will help others by advancing cancer research.

Some of the risks include:
- The new treatment may not work for you, even if others benefit.
- The new treatment may have an unknown side effect which might be worse than the standard treatment.
- Most trials are randomized. Most trials compare a new treatment with a current standard treatment. You may be placed in a study group that receives the new treatment or the standard treatment.

Why are clinical trials important?
If you have received a vaccine, antibiotic or medicine for a common disease, like high blood pressure or diabetes, you have benefited from clinical trials. Thousands of women, men and children of many ethnic and racial groups participate in clinical trials each year to reveal the best way to prevent, screen, diagnose and treat diseases. Diverse participation is necessary to ensure that everyone benefits.

Siteman Cancer Center patients have access to more than 500 clinical trials designed to assess the effectiveness of innovative cancer treatments. By participating in a clinical trial, patients can gain early access to investigational treatments that are not widely available.
Who should consider participating in a clinical trial?

- People of all ages, walks-of-life and races are urged to take part in clinical studies because some treatments affect people differently. Doctors need to know what works best for everyone.
- Clinical studies are not just for cancer patients who have run out of options. They are beneficial to patients with cancers of all stages.

What about safety?

- Your safety and care are always our top priority.
- Every new drug is extensively tested in a laboratory to confirm that it is safe and possibly helpful for patients with cancer.
- You will be fully informed about any potential benefits or risks from the trial.
- Participation is completely voluntary. You can stop at any time and this will not affect your quality of care.

Clinical Trials Give Hope

Participating in a clinical trial is a rare opportunity to make an important contribution to humanity. You help to improve healthcare for everyone.

Clinical trials are at the heart of medical research. The knowledge gained leads to medical advances and gives hope for improvements in all stages of cancer care.

- Prevention
- Early detection
- Diagnosis
- Treatment
- Hope for a cure

Ask your doctor if a clinical trial is right for you.