



The Importance of Diversity in Clinical Trials: Today's Studies are Tomorrow's Cure

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. Participation from different ethnic and racial groups is necessary to ensure that everyone benefits.

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 studies are evaluating if the new treatment is more effective than the current standard treatment for the disease.

Why should you participate?

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 standard treatment.
- 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 is diversity important?

In the past, clinical trials mostly included white men, despite the fact that women and other ethnic and racial groups suffered from the same illnesses. In 1993, federal legislation was passed requiring that women and people from different ethnic and racial groups participate in research studies. This was to ensure that treatment results from clinical trials would be safe and effective for all people.



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