

Clinical Trials: Basic Information

What is a clinical trial?

A clinical trial is a study that tests new ways to treat a condition or to compare existing treatments with one another. Some clinical trials test new drugs, while others test new devices, surgical procedures, or behavioral treatments. Clinical trials are needed to develop new treatments and to improve existing treatments for conditions such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Clinical trials generally compare a treatment with:

- Current treatments considered to be the standard of care
- A placebo - a pill or liquid that contains no medicine
- No treatment at all

Clinical trials test if a new treatment:

- Is safe
- Works well
- Is better than the current standard of care

What can I expect if I or someone I care for participates in a clinical trial?

- Close monitoring of the patient's health and any side effects
- Participation is always voluntary – You may quit at any time.
- You may receive a treatment, a placebo, or no treatment.
- You may not know whether you are receiving a treatment or a placebo.
- The treatment may or may not work.
- You will likely have many appointments and lab tests.
- You may have unexpected side effects.
- Some clinical trials will pay for expenses you might have by participating. Sometimes you may receive a small payment in appreciation of your time.
- There will be no charge to you for any labs tests, x-rays or scans etc. that are required for the clinical trial.

More information on clinical trials nationwide is available at:
[Clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov) and cancer.org/clinicaltrials

Interested in clinical trials? Ask your doctor or health care provider at your next appointment.