

Questions for Clinical Trial Volunteers to ask the Clinical Trial Doctor

When you meet with your clinical trial doctor, you should feel free to ask questions and discuss any concerns you may have. Your personal physician could also be a helpful resource for understanding clinical trials in general.

The following questions might help you in talking with your clinical trial doctor.

Tips for talking with your doctor about clinical trials

- Consider taking a family member or a friend along for support and help
- Plan your questions ahead of time, and don't hesitate to ask any follow-up questions that come up during your conversation with the doctor
- Write down your questions in advance to make sure you remember to ask them all, and write down the answers so that you can review them later. You might also consider bringing a tape recorder to save the conversation on tape

General questions about the clinical trial

- What is the purpose of the trial?
- What do researchers know about this investigational treatment?
- Who is paying for the trial?
- Who has reviewed and approved the trial?
- How are trial results and volunteers' safety being monitored?
- How long will the trial last?
- What would my responsibilities be if I participate in the clinical trial?

Questions about risks and benefits of clinical trial participation

- What benefits are possible in the short-term?
- What benefits are possible in the long-term?
- What are the short-term risks, such as side effects?
- Are there any possible long-term risks?

Questions about clinical trial participation and care

- What kinds of therapies, procedures and tests will I have during the trial?
- Will there be any painful or unpleasant treatments? If so, how long will they last?
- How do the tests in the trial compare with the standard tests for my condition?
- Will I be able to take my regular medications while in the clinical trial?
- Where should I go to receive my medical care?
- Who will be in charge of my care during the trial?

Questions about personal issues

- How could being in this trial affect my daily life (positive/negative effects)?
- While I am in the trial, can I talk to other clinical trial participants, or can I talk to other people, such as family members or friends, about the trial?

Questions about trial-related costs

- Will I have to pay for anything related to the trial, such as medical tests or drugs? If so, what are the charges likely to be?
- What will my health insurance cover? What if I don't have health insurance?
- Who should I talk to from my insurance company or health plan provider about any questions?
- Will there be any travel or child care costs that I need to consider while I am in the study?

Additional questions

- How many volunteers are participating in the trial?
- Will I be told about the trial results if I participate?
- Who will have access to my medical records?
- Who will be told that I am participating?
- Will my regular doctor know that I'm participating?
- What treatment would I receive if I did not join the trial?
- Can I leave the clinical trial if I want to?
- What will happen if I experience a side effect?
- Who can I contact in case of an emergency?
- Is there anything I am not allowed to do while I am in the clinical trial?

This list is based on information from the National Cancer Institute.