

## Questions to ask...

Why is this trial being done?

What are my other options (standard treatments, other studies)? What are their advantages and disadvantages?

What kind of tests and treatments does the study involve? How often are they done?

Will this require an extra time commitment on my part?

How could the study affect my daily life?

What side effects might I expect from the study treatment? (Remember that there can also be side effects from standard treatments and from the disease itself.)

How long will the study last?

What type of long-term follow-up care is part of the study?

## What do I do next?

*Find out more about cancer clinical trials, exactly what they are and how you can participate by speaking to your doctor or visit:*

[www.bccancer.bc.ca/res/clintrials](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/res/clintrials)

### **BC Cancer Agency - Vancouver Centre**

600 West 10th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4E6  
604.877.6000  
1.800.663.3333 (in BC)

### **BC Cancer Agency - Fraser Valley Centre**

13750 96th Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3V 1Z2  
604.930.2098  
1.800.523.2885 (in BC)

### **BC Cancer Agency - Vancouver Island Centre**

2410 Lee Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8R 6V5  
250.519.5500  
1.800.670.3322 (in BC)

### **BC Cancer Agency – Centre for the Southern Interior**

399 Royal Avenue  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 5L3  
250.712.3900  
1.888.563.7773 (in BC)

### **BC Cancer Agency – Abbotsford Centre**

32900 Marshall Road  
Abbotsford, BC V2S 0C2  
604.851.4710  
1.877.547.3777 (in BC)



**BC Cancer Agency**

CARE + RESEARCH

*An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority*



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**BC Cancer Agency**

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## Clinical Trials



You should feel free to ask your doctors and nurses any questions you have about clinical trials.

## What are clinical trials?

Clinical trials are research studies that involve people. They are the final step in a long process that begins with research in a lab and after many years of testing, become available to patients in clinical trials. Only the most promising new treatments reach the clinical trial stage. Treatments used today are the result of past clinical trials.

In cancer research, clinical trials are designed to answer questions about new ways to:

- Treat cancer
- Find and diagnose cancer
- Prevent cancer
- Manage symptoms of cancer

This brochure will focus on cancer treatment studies. Studies are designed to answer questions about new treatments or investigate ways of improving existing and established treatments. These trials test many types of treatments, such as:

- New drugs or vaccines
- New ways to give radiation therapy
- New combinations of treatments

## Who can join a clinical trial?

Your doctors will know which trials are available and will advise whether you meet the eligibility criteria set out in the study. The eligibility criteria are a set of guidelines used to identify the right participants for the study and ensures the safety of all participants. Blood tests and scans may also be used to determine your suitability for the trial.

### Participation

The choice to enter a clinical trial rests completely with each patient as does the decision to withdraw from the study at any time. If you wish to stop the treatment, for whatever reason, your care will not change or be compromised by your decision.

### Placebo – What is it? Will I get it?

A placebo or a ‘sugar pill’ is an inactive form of a study medication which resembles the real medication. Some cancer clinical trials use a placebo, others do not. In cancer clinical trials, no patient goes without care if there is a known treatment that could be beneficial. If a study includes a placebo, you would be made aware of this prior to consenting to participate in the study.

## What are the pros and cons of being in a clinical trial?

Choosing to join a clinical trial is a decision only you can make, but you may want to discuss it with those close to you, and your doctors and nurses. As a treatment option, a clinical trial has possible benefits as well as drawbacks.

### Possible benefits

- If a new treatment is proven to work and you are taking it, you may be among the first to benefit.
- You are taking an active part in a decision that affects your life.
- You have a chance to help others.

### Possible drawbacks

- New treatments under study are not always better than, or even as good as, standard care.
- New treatments may have side effects that doctors do not expect or the side effects may be worse than the standard treatment.
- Many trials require more testing and monitoring than standard treatments.

The goal of clinical trials is to improve patient care. Your doctors receive NO additional compensation should you decide to participate in a clinical trial.

All treatments used today are the results of past clinical trials.

Cancer clinical trials rarely use a placebo. In cancer clinical trials, no patient goes without treatment if there is any known treatment that could benefit that patient.

If a new treatment is proven to work and you are taking it, you may be among the first to benefit.