

RESEARCH AND CLINICAL TRIALS – IS IT RIGHT FOR ME?

Your doctor might ask if you'd like to take part in research – or a 'clinical trial'. Don't worry, this isn't extra study for you to do. Being part of research can improve care for other young people who face cancer in the future. In fact, the treatment you're about to start began life as research. But if you don't want to take part, that's your choice.

What's a clinical trial?

It's a form of research used to test new treatment methods, such as drugs or surgery. Clinical trials are divided into different stages, called phases.

Phase one and two clinical trials explore new types of treatment and what is the best way to give them. They usually involve a small number of people.

Phase three clinical trials are about understanding the benefits of the new treatment over an existing one. These need a lot of people.

How do I take part in a clinical trial?

You and your parents (depending on your age) will need to give something called 'informed consent'. This means that the trial has been explained to you by a medical professional who has told you what will be involved and that you've agreed to take part. You should be given at least 24 hours to think about your decision, if you need it.

Is it safe?

All clinical trials that involve young people have to be approved by a panel of experts before they can go ahead. They only approve ones that appear to keep you safe and treat you fairly.

You'll only be asked to take part in research if doctors think it's the right option for you. It's entirely up to you if you do it. Make sure you ask enough questions to get the answers you need to decide.

If you want to find out more, see if you can talk to a member of the research team to understand the benefits and risks of being involved.

If you take part in a trial, your information and data have to be kept secure.

Why would I take part?

Taking part in research can help you get the latest treatments that you might not be able to have otherwise. Even if the research doesn't benefit you, it will help other young people in the future. It's your chance to do something really, really worthwhile for other people who have cancer.

What if I say 'no' or change my mind?

Don't worry about not taking part in a trial. You shouldn't feel any pressure to. Your medical team will still give you the best possible care if you decide not to go for it. It's your choice. You can also pull out of a clinical trial at any time.

How can I find out more about clinical trials?

CCLG has a factsheet called Taking part in research which you can order or download for free from their website.

Who are we?

CLIC Sargent is a charity dedicated to supporting young people like you. We help people with cancer aged 24 and under from diagnosis onwards. To find out more about how we can help you and your family, or for more information about living with cancer, visit clicsargent.org.uk