MRCT CENTER
THE MULTI-REGIONAL CLINICAL TRIALS CENTER OF BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL AND HARVARD

What are... **Focus Groups?**

Like a ***group discussion*** led by a member of the study team.

A ***focus group*** is a **small group of people who meet to talk about a specific topic** that researchers want to learn about.

Know Your Vocab!
click here to open the cheat sheet

Some examples of focus group topics include:

- Virtual vs in-person medical appointments
- Recreational drug use
- The design of a research study

What is expected of me in a focus group?

You'll be asked to **talk about your thoughts and experiences** with a small group of people, including a researcher.

You'll also be able to **listen to others in the group**.

If you do join, you should be **honest** about your opinions and experiences. It's **also okay not to say anything**.

How long will it take?

Focus groups usually last **60-90 minutes.**

They usually just meet once, but sometimes more.

Who else will be there?

Focus groups usually include **6-10 people** who are similar in some way.

Who leads focus groups?

There are usually 1 or 2 **researchers** who help guide the discussion.

***For example**, the people in your group may all have the same illness, be the same sex, or be around the same age.*

Why would I join a focus group?

- You'll help answer the research question.
- You can meet new people who might be in a similar situation to you.
- You can discuss shared or different experiences that you have had.
- Your opinions will be heard!
- You can learn more. about different types of health and wellness topics.
- You might be helping others in the future.

Who will hear what I said in the focus group?

Everyone who participates will hear what is being said.

The focus group leader will ask you to keep the discussion **private**.

This means not talking about what you heard or said after you leave the focus group.

Remember, sometimes the law requires the researcher to share your information to help keep you safe.

Can I say NO to joining a focus group?

Of course!

Joining a focus group is always voluntary.

You should feel comfortable asking researchers any **questions** you might have, like:

- What information will be collected?
- What is the purpose of this focus group?
- Will the focus group be recorded?
- How many people will be in the room?
- Will there be a note taker?

Questions?

Ask any questions you have!

You have the right to know!

You can learn more at:

mrctcenter.org/for-kids

www.icanresearch.org ICAN Approved International Children's Advisory Network

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