

WHAT IS CLINICAL RESEARCH?

A guide for young people.



I've heard my doctor and my parents talking about *clinical research*, *clinical trials*, and *clinical studies*. What do these words mean?

Clinical research, clinical trials, and clinical studies are similar terms to describe ways to learn new things about how to diagnose, treat, and prevent diseases. To keep things simple, we'll just use the term **research**.

There are many different types of research. Some research involves testing new drugs, devices, or possible treatments for people who are sick. Other research is done to improve existing treatments, to figure out why someone is sick, or to understand how to prevent someone from getting sick.

Think of all the medicines and vaccines that keep you healthy. They were all tested through clinical research on people, including children and young people.



Who leads research?

People who lead research are called investigators. Doctors, scientists, and others can be investigators.





Who participates in research?

Many different people join research. Research can include young people, old people, healthy people, people with a certain illness, or a mix of people.

Is participating in research the same thing as going to the doctor for a check-up, or going to the doctor when I am sick?

No. During regular check-ups or sick visits, your doctor helps you stay healthy or feel better. During research, investigators learn new things that might help other people with your condition or to keep people healthy. You might have extra visits or tests when you participate.

Will research help me?

Some research may help you but there is no way to know if it will. Other research may not help you but could help other people in the future.

Can I get hurt if I participate?

Research is done in ways to keep people safe. You can ask the research team about the risks of the study.

If I participate in research, can I still receive care from my own doctor or another doctor?

Yes! Even though you might be seeing somebody else for research, you can still see your own doctor or another doctor for check-ups, sick visits, and other things.

These examples can help you understand the difference between research and regular medical care:



MEDICAL CARE

Jamal goes to the doctor to get a flu shot.



RESEARCH

Seema participates in research that tests whether a new vaccine works.

