

## Clinical Trials Explained

Clinical trials are carefully designed and supervised scientific research studies involving people.

In cancer clinical trials, you are given the opportunity to voluntarily take part in a research study that your oncologist feels may help to slow or stop your cancer from growing or provide a better quality of life.

Clinical trials play an important role in advancing medical knowledge and turn medical progress into a reality. Clinical trials are the final steps in a process which often began in the laboratory.

All treatments and interventions used today are the result of past successful clinical trials.

Patient participation in clinical trials is essential to learning more about cancer and its treatment. Every patient should have the opportunity to participate.

### **The ultimate goal of cancer clinical trials is to cure cancer by finding better ways to:**

- Prevent cancer (finding new ways to stop cancer from occurring in patients who have never had cancer)
- Detect cancer earlier (testing ways to better screen and diagnose cancer in the earliest stages to hopefully increase the chance of a cure)
- Treat cancer (using new drugs, radiation therapy, or surgical techniques, using older treatments in newer ways, or a combination of any of these)
- Control symptoms or side effects (using drugs, techniques, or interventions to improve the quality of daily life)
- Help people live better and longer with cancer (survivorship)

### **Cancer clinical trials may involve:**

- New ways of doing surgery or the timing of when to do surgery
- New chemotherapy drugs or combinations of chemotherapy with other treatments
- New radiation techniques, such as radiosurgery
- Newer treatments, such as immunotherapy, vaccines, and personalized targeted therapies
- Using older therapies in a new way
- Using medical devices and technology to treat tumors

Clinical trials provide the proof needed to bring new and better cancer treatments and interventions to patients. They change the standards of care and provide better ways of preventing cancer and detecting it earlier.

For more information, please visit the [Canadian Cancer Society](#).