TIP SHEET

Clinical Research Services

WE CAN'T LET CANCER WIN.

THAT'S WHY RPCI HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF CLINICAL RESEARCH STUDIES UNDERWAY TO IMPROVE CANCER PREVENTION, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.

What You Need to Know

All the cancer drugs and therapies used today came about after many years of research. Clinical research studies are the final stages of this research where physicians and scientists work together to evaluate a promising new treatment or approach. A clinical study may test a new:

- approach to diagnose or prevent cancer
- drug to treat cancer
- way to use or combine existing treatments

When clinical studies identify new and effective methods, these treatments eventually become the new standard of care.

As many as **50%** of RPCI patients are eligible to join a clinical research study.

Each patient enrolled in a study is assigned a clinical research coordinator who ensures you receive the care required by the research study.

Why Should You Consider a Clinical Research Study?

1) Enrolling in a study may be the only way to get a particular kind of treatment.

2) If a new treatment is proven effective, you may be among the first to benefit.

3) It's an opportunity to help others and improve cancer treatment.

Are Clinical Study Treatments a Better First Option?

For some patients, yes. As we continue to decode human genes, we can identify certain mutations, characteristics or abnormalities of some cancer cells. We are now developing treatments that target or attack these specific abnormalities, thereby killing cancer cells more effectively.

A study drug that targets a genetic characteristic of your tumor could offer your best option. Some of these treatments, such as trastuzumab (Herceptin), which targets breast and stomach cancers that show abnormal activity of a protein called HER-2, have become the standard of care. Many more treatments are available only through clinical research studies.

The Stages of Clinical Research Studies

Most clinical research involves testing of a new drug. Each study progresses in an orderly series of steps called phases. This allows researchers to ask and answer questions in a way that gives reliable results while protecting patients. Clinical studies usually include three phases.

Phase I studies...

are the first step in testing a new drug or intervention in people. Researchers evaluate what dose is safe and how it should be given.

Phase II studies...

continue to test the safety of the drug or intervention and evaluate how well it works. Phase II studies often focus on a particular type of cancer.

Phase III studies...

compare a new agent or intervention with the current standard. Phase III studies may include hundreds of people across the country.

Setting the Record Straight

Many people misunderstand the purpose of clinical studies and how they're conducted. Learn the facts you need to make an informed decision about whether to participate.

Myth	Fact
I could get a placebo (pill, liquid or powder) that contains no medicine instead of treatment.	Few cancer research studies use placebos, and they are never given in place of treatment. A study may compare standard treatment plus a new treatment to standard treatment plus a placebo. You will be told if a study uses a placebo.
People only enroll in a study after trying all other options.	Many patients enroll in a study because it's their best option, before any treatment. Some studies don't involve treatment but examine new ways to prevent cancer or its recurrence.
Because RPCI is a research institution, patients are required to participate in studies.	About half our patients are eligible for a study, but it's only an option. It is entirely the patient's decision.
Once you enroll in a study, you cannot change your mind.	You may choose to leave a study at any time, for any reason.

RPCI's Clinical Research Center

One of the first in the nation to focus specifically on developing new cancer treatments, our center provides more treatment options through clinical research studies, offers the highest level of patient safety and quickly generates precise data on potential new treatments.

RPCI has a strong history of cancer research success. Among other milestones, we:

- launched the first chemotherapy program in the United States in 1904
- developed the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test to detect prostate cancer
- conducted studies that helped gain FDA approval of Gleevec®, now a first line therapy for chronic myeloid leukemia (CML).

Learn more about Clinical Research Studies at RPCI

roswellpark.org/clinical-trials

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