

Six Facts about Clinical Research Participation



No. 1

Patients Are Key Research Partners

You are the expert on Parkinson's disease (PD). Scientists need your partnership in research trials and studies to understand, measure, predict, prevent, slow and stop this disease. Every treatment that exists today is the direct result of individuals raising their hands to volunteer for research.



No. 2

There Is a Study (or Several) for You

Whether you were just diagnosed or have been living with Parkinson's for decades, have had deep brain stimulation, or live hours from a clinical site, you can contribute to our understanding of Parkinson's and the development of new treatments. Even if you don't have Parkinson's, you can participate in PD research.



No. 3

Not Every Study Tests a Drug

Many studies collect data and samples to better understand the biology of Parkinson's. Some trials and studies test exercise, physical therapy or other non-invasive treatments rather than medication.



No. 4

Participation Brings Risks and Benefits

While some risks, such as potential side effects of a new drug, are inherent in research, participation also may bring benefits. Some people say they gain a sense of control over their disease. Research also could offer more time with Parkinson's experts and early access to emerging treatments.



No. 5

Your Safety Is Top Priority

Safeguards are in place to minimize risk in research trials and studies. Researchers must have all study plans and materials approved by an outside committee of experts, and must monitor for and report any undesirable changes in a person's health — whether a result of the study or something else — throughout the course of the research.



No. 6

There Are Many Ways to Find Trials and Studies

Start by asking your doctor about opportunities for research participation, but also look to your support group or your PD community for referrals. Some health care centers and patient organizations hold in-person research events, and there are opportunities to learn about trials on the internet too. You can register online with the Foundation's Fox Trial Finder (foxtrialfinder.org) to be matched with recruiting trials that need volunteers as well.