

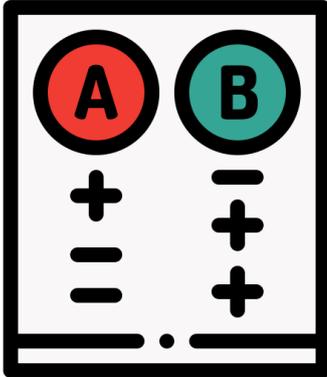
# Clinical trials

## An easy-read guide



# Section 1. What is a clinical trial?

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A trial is a way to test something.



Clinical trials can be used to test treatments.



For example, if a new medicine is better than what is used at the moment.



Clinical trials can also test how safe a new treatment is.

## Section 1. What is a clinical trial?



**Clinical trials are really important to make sure that treatments work and have a positive effect on patients.**



**They help guide decisions for professionals, patients and families.**



**Clinical trials are important to make sure treatments are safe and effective before they are used as a new treatment for patients.**



**Clinical trials can help create new treatments and medicines. These new treatments and medicines will improve people's health.**

## The treatment in a clinical trial can be:



### **A medical product.**

This could be something like a new medicine.



### **A medical procedure.**

This could be a new way of doing an operation.



### **A medical device.**

This could be something like a pacemaker or a new type of scanner.



### **A psychological treatment.**

This could be something like a different therapy for severe anxiety.

## Section 1. What is a clinical trial?



Clinical trials can take place in many locations, including doctors' surgeries, universities, hospitals, and community clinics. We shall talk about trials in hospitals in this leaflet.



Clinical trials test one thing against another.



**Clinical trials may compare:**

Clinical trials may compare a new medical treatment to the usual care that is already available.

**New** treatment



vs

**Standard** treatment

Standard

## Clinical trials may compare:



Some trials also use a **placebo** to help to find out if the new treatment is better than the usual treatment.

New treatment



VS

Placebo



**Placebos** look just the same as the study treatments, but do not have the new treatment ingredients.



Same treatment  
as usual

Some patients will have the **placebo** treatment which means they are actually having the same treatment as usual.



The patient and the researcher do not know who is given the new treatment and who is given the placebo.



This is called 'blinding'. The study team analyst who looks at the trial results knows who had what!



The researcher will explain to the patient that they will have either the new treatment or the placebo but not know which - and make sure they are ok about that.



A placebo treatment will not contain anything to actively treat the patient.

Clinical trials may compare:



Clinical trials may compare a new treatment to no intervention. No intervention means doctors will wait and watch to see how the patient gets on just with their usual care.

**New** treatment



vs

**No** intervention

**No  
intervention**

Usually in a trial, some patients will get the new treatment, whilst others will get their usual care.

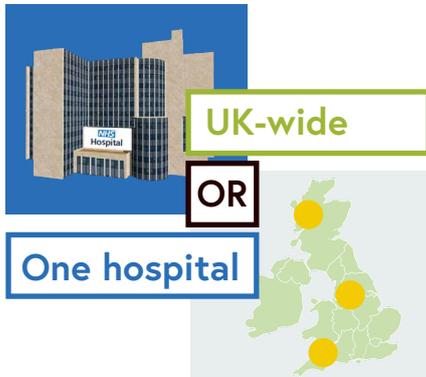
**Treatment 1** (new treatment)



**Treatment 2** (usual care)



## Section 1. What is a clinical trial?



Clinical trials can happen in just one hospital, or in hospitals all across the country.



The decision about who receives the trial treatment is made by a computer, and not by the patient, nurse, doctor or research practitioner.



The computer picks people at random.



This means that in a clinical trial different people receive different care.

## Section 1. What is a clinical trial?



A clinical trial usually happens in different places at the same time. This is to make sure the results from the trial are not due to anything else. For example, like where you live.



Usually the doctor, nurse or research practitioner will only find out what treatment a patient has received at the end of the trial.



The NHS runs clinical trials all over the United Kingdom.



The research team at your local hospital will have a list of all the trials happening in your hospital.

## Section 2.

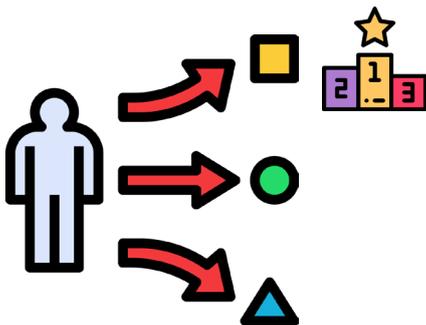
# Why do we do trials?



We might think a new treatment will be better than what is used at the moment.



Doctors do not know how effective a treatment can be until it is tested in a trial.



Trials are needed to compare treatments and find out what works best.



This helps improve the care given to patients.

## Section 2. Why do we do trials?



Helping others

The results from trials can help other patients, as well as patients in the future.



This means that many treatments you have been given have already been tested in trials with other people.

# Section 3.

## What is a research team?



**A research team will include lots of different people.**



**Some people work behind the scenes, and patients would never see them during the trial.**



**A Chief Investigator leads the trial.**

**Locally, a Principal Investigator makes sure the trial is working well.**



**This can be a university researcher, doctor, nurse, midwife or other health care professional.**

### Section 3. What is a research team?



A research nurse or perhaps a midwife or clinical research practitioner will usually look after patients during the trial.



Sometimes the research team member looking after you at the hospital will talk to your GP.



Scientists and researchers will study any test results such as blood tests.



A data analyst will put all of this information on a computer.

### Section 3. What is a research team?



Another staff member will look at the information entered on the computer and check if it is right.



Everyone works together to make sure the trial goes well.



I want to take part in a research trial.

How can I find out if there is a trial that I can take part in?



Be Part Of Research is a website which has all the trials happening in the country.

If you are reading on a screen, you can click the link here: [www.bepartofresearch.uk](http://www.bepartofresearch.uk)

## Section 4.

# Taking part in a clinical trial



If you take part in a trial, you could make a difference to other people's lives.

**X** or **✓**



It is completely your choice whether to take part in a trial.



If you have any concerns about trials, speak to one of the nurses, doctors or researchers. They will address your concerns or questions.



Treatments used in clinical trials are very safe.

## Section 4. Taking part in a clinical trial



However with some trials there is a risk that the new treatment does not work as well as expected.



The researcher will explain the risks and you are always asked if you understand what those are and if you are happy to go ahead.



Thank you to everyone who takes part in research.



The NIHR are working with the NHS to try to find new treatments and ways to care for people. For information on how you can help, visit [bepartofresearch.uk](https://www.bepartofresearch.uk)

