

2026 RESEARCH FAST FACTS

Clinical Trials



ABOUT CLINICAL TRIALS

CLINICAL TRIALS are an important step in discovering new ways to treat breast cancer and often determine whether a new therapy, procedure or test will become part of the standard of care.

WHAT IS A CLINICAL TRIAL? [Clinical trials](#) are studies involving people who volunteer to take part in research studies. There are two types of clinical trials: interventional and observational.

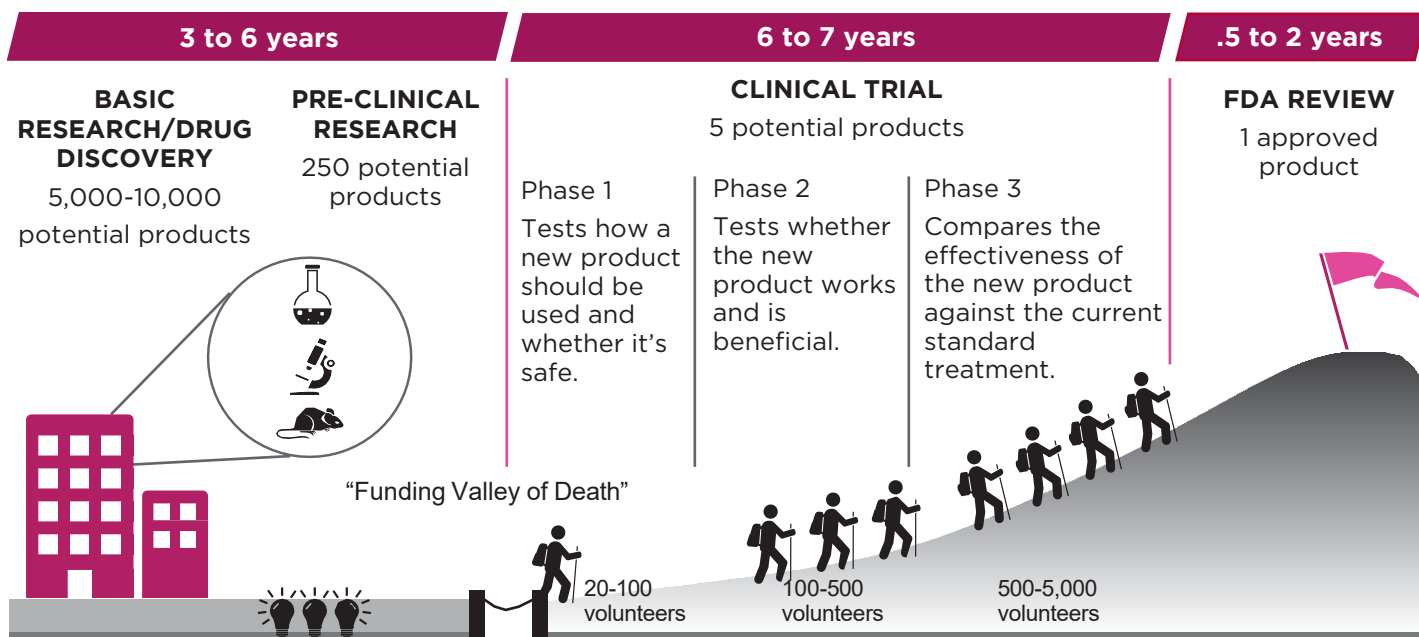
- In an **interventional** study, the participant is assigned to a group that receives one or more interventions, such as a new drug, device, procedure or diagnostic test to assess its safety and efficacy.
- In an **observational** study, participants are not assigned to an intervention – they are only observed, and the outcomes are measured by researchers. These types of clinical studies are often used to identify cancer risk factors or behaviors among different populations or to identify quality of life topics that are important to survivors or those living with breast cancer.

CLINICAL TRIALS INVESTIGATE MORE THAN JUST TREATMENT.

Clinical trials also test new medical devices, risk assessment and diagnostic tools, and breast cancer prevention methods. In observational trials, the product of the trial is knowledge, or an approach that may contribute to improvements in breast cancer care.

CLINICAL TRIALS BRING MORE TREATMENTS AND TOOLS TO THE CLINIC.

This process begins in the lab, where thousands of scientists spend years testing tens of thousands of ideas. Through a long and difficult process of elimination, researchers narrow down these ideas to just a few. Next, resources and funding must be secured for the most promising ideas that will be tested in clinical trials. There are multiple phases in a clinical trial, and each phase is designed to answer certain questions. At the end of this long journey, just one product or idea from the initial thousands reach patients. Clinical trials are at the heart of all medical advances. Conducting trials is a long and expensive process that can take up to 15 years and cost upwards of \$2 billion and is filled with stops and starts, but today's clinical trials will lead to new and improved standards of care for breast cancer in the future.



Read more about **the importance** and **benefits** of clinical trials and **how to take part in a clinical trial.**



For more information, call the **Komen Breast Care Hotline** 1-877 **GO KOMEN** (1-877-465-6636) or the **Clinical Trial Information Hotline.**

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RESEARCH INVESTMENT AT A GLANCE: (1982-2026)

Over **\$293 million** in Komen research grants have supported over **600** clinical trials



WHAT WE'RE INVESTIGATING



Testing the [combination therapy](#) of antibody-drug conjugate sacituzumab govitecan and immunotherapy pembrolizumab to see if these combined therapies improve long-term survival outcomes for people with metastatic, triple negative breast cancer.



The SAPPHO Study, a Phase II clinical trial, is testing whether an aggressive treatment approach using a series of HER2-targeted therapies could potentially cure some HER2-positive breast cancers that are metastatic at first diagnosis.



The [STOP-HER2 clinical trial](#) is investigating if a blood test measuring circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA) can help determine which people with HER2-positive metastatic breast cancer can stop treatment without a change in or progression of their cancer.

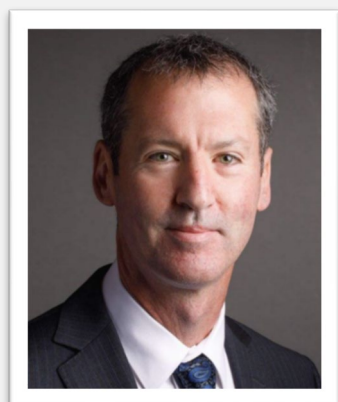
The **Translational Breast Cancer Research Consortium** (TBCRC) is a collaborative group founded in 2005 to conduct innovative and high impact clinical trials for breast cancer. Komen has provided **\$20.75** million to the TBCRC to support over 75 clinical trials.

75 approved clinical trials, over half including patients with metastatic disease.

18 clinical sites working together to conduct innovative, biologically driven clinical research.

More than **7,550** clinical trial participants.

SPOTLIGHT



Komen Scholar Dr. Ian Krop is conducting research to determine if a liquid biopsy test, which measures circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA) in a blood sample, can help determine the best treatment course for people with early-stage HER2-positive breast cancer. Learn more [here](#).

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED FROM KOMEN-FUNDED RESEARCH

- Women diagnosed with breast cancer at 35 years old or younger have worse survival outcomes than women diagnosed at 45-55 years old, emphasizing the need for improved therapies for young women with breast cancer.
- The drug olaparib, approved to treat hereditary breast cancers in people with inherited *BRCA1/2* gene mutations, [may also work](#) in non-hereditary breast cancers with spontaneous *BRCA1/2* gene mutations.
- Participants who lost weight in the [BWEL clinical trial](#) saw improvements in indicators like metabolism and inflammation in the body, which may reduce the risk of breast cancer recurrence that has been linked to being overweight or obese.



LEARN MORE ABOUT BREAST CANCER

MORE KOMEN-FUNDED RESEARCH STORIES

GET INVOLVED & SUPPORT RESEARCH