

## Did you know ...

Cancer clinical trial enrollment by adults in the U.S. is less than 5 percent! And of these participants, fewer than 10 percent are members of racial or ethnic communities who often face higher breast cancer mortality rates.

Watch [Sheila McGlown](#) share her story about how she is benefitting from clinical trials. Also, hear from Dr. Barbara Segarra on how [diversity improves clinical trials](#) in this short video.

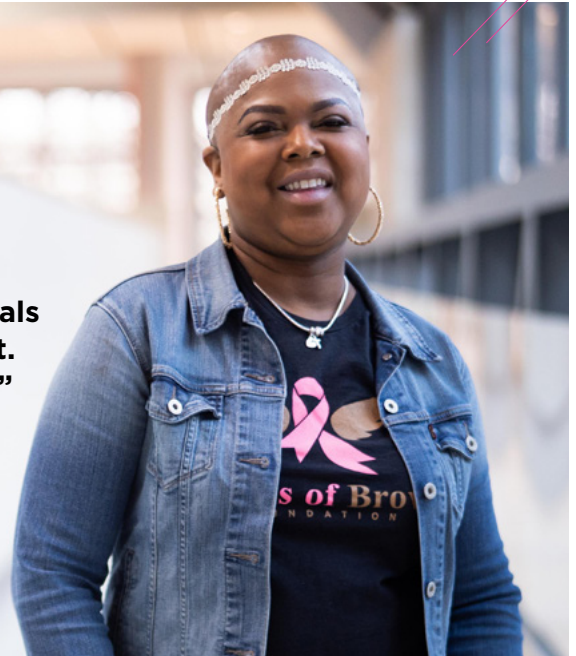
## Susan G. Komen® Clinical Trial Information Helpline

If you or a loved one needs information or resources about clinical trials, call our clinical trial information helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) or email [clinicaltrialinfo@komen.org](mailto:clinicaltrialinfo@komen.org).

**“We need to continually educate the breast cancer community that clinical trials are not always a last resort. Research is saving my life.”**

SHEILA MCGLOWN

*Sheila has been living with stage IV, or metastatic breast cancer (MBC), since 2009.*



## What is a clinical trial?

**Clinical trials** test the safety and benefits of new treatments as well as new combinations (or new doses) of standard treatments. They can also study other parts of care including risk reduction, diagnosis and screening. People volunteer to take part in these research studies. Here we discuss breast cancer treatment trials.

Breast cancer treatment clinical trials have led to many medical advances, such as the use of hormone therapy and chemotherapy.

Before a treatment is tested in a clinical trial, it's studied in a lab. Even though some treatments seem to work well in the lab, they don't always help people. That's why clinical trials are needed – to make sure the treatment is safe and effective for people.

## The benefits of clinical trials

If you are thinking about joining a clinical trial, talk with your doctor. Some benefits are listed below:

- You have the chance to try a new treatment which may be better than the standard treatment.
- Even if you don't get the new treatment, you'll still get the standard treatment (which is the best care possible).
- You're helping improve cancer treatment in the future by adding to research.

For more information, visit [komen.org](http://komen.org) or call Susan G. Komen's breast care helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 10 PM ET.

## Resources

### **BreastCancerTrials.org**

in collaboration with Komen offers a custom matching service to help you find a clinical trial that fits your needs. They also provide a [Metastatic Trial Search Tool](#).

**National Cancer Institute**  
[cancer.gov/clinicaltrials](https://cancer.gov/clinicaltrials)

**National Institutes of Health**  
[cc.nih.gov](https://cc.nih.gov)

## Related educational resources:

- [Treatment Overview for Early Breast Cancer](#)
- [QTAD -Clinical Trials](#)
- [5 Truths About Breast Cancer Clinical Trials](#)
- [Find the Right Clinical Trial. For You. For a Loved one.](#)
- [Breast Cancer 101 – Clinical Trials video](#)

## There are 4 main phases of clinical trials:

### **Phase 1 (phase I)**

Studies whether a new treatment is safe to use over a range of doses. The treatment may be given to people with different types of cancer.

### **Phase 2 (phase II)**

Studies how well the treatment works for a certain cancer (such as breast cancer).

### **Phase 3 (phase III)**

Studies how well the new treatment works compared to the standard treatment.

### **Phase 4 (phase IV)**

Studies the long-term side effects of treatments or answer new questions about the treatment.

## Placebos (or sugar pills)

Breast cancer clinical trials never use placebos instead of standard treatments. You'll either get the standard treatment or the new treatment. Even if you don't get the new treatment, your breast cancer will be treated the same as if you weren't in a trial. Sometimes you may get the standard treatment plus a placebo rather than the standard treatment plus the new treatment.

## Enrolling in a treatment clinical trial

All clinical trials have specific criteria for joining the study. Criteria vary from study to study and may be based on:

- Type and stage of breast cancer
- Past treatments for breast cancer
- Other medical conditions

## Informed consent

Informed consent is the process of reviewing the risks and benefits of the study. It's required for all clinical trials. Before joining a trial, a research coordinator, doctor or nurse will go over the study protocol with you. They'll answer any questions you have. If you decide to join the study, you'll be asked for your written permission. The document you sign is called a consent form. You will get a copy.

Clinical trials must follow a strict plan called a protocol. The protocol follows medical, ethical and legal guidelines to ensure your safety. Being in a clinical trial is voluntary. You may leave the trial at any time, for any reason. Giving written permission to join the study doesn't force you to stay in the study.

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