CANCER EXPLAINED PRESENTS



A CHECKLIST

CLINICAL TRIAL CHECKLIST

Steps to walk through before deciding about a trial

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A CANCER EXPLAINED HANDOUT · BASED ON **NCI** · UPDATED **2026-07-05**
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1 Learn the basics first

- [ ] Understand what the study is testing and why — every trial has a written plan called a protocol.
- [ ] Ask which phase the trial is in (Phase 1–4) and what that phase is designed to answer.
- [ ] Ask what treatments are being compared and whether a placebo could be part of the study.
- [ ] Remember: joining is always voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time.

2 Gather your information

- [ ] Your exact diagnosis, stage, and any biomarker or genetic test results.
- [ ] A list of treatments you have already had, with approximate dates.
- [ ] Your current medications, allergies, and other health conditions.
- [ ] Insurance details, so the team can check coverage of routine care costs.

3 Before you sign the consent form

- [ ] Read the informed consent document fully — take it home and take your time.
- [ ] Ask about possible benefits, risks, and side effects, and how they compare with standard treatment.
- [ ] Ask how often visits and tests happen, and who to call with problems day or night.
- [ ] Ask who pays for the study treatment, tests, and travel — and what your insurance covers.
- [ ] Bring a family member or friend to help listen and take notes.

THE BOTTOM LINE

You do not have to decide alone or quickly — discuss every trial with your oncology team, and ask as many questions as you need.

Sources: NCI: Clinical trials information (cancer.gov/research/participate/clinical-trials) · NCI: Patient safety in trials (cancer.gov/research/participate/clinical-trials/safety)

Learn more in plain language: cancerexplained.org/clinical-trials · **Updated:** 2026-07-05

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