



Talk with your patients about clinical trials



Use this guide to start a meaningful conversation with your patients today!

Clinical trials and kidney disease

Clinical trials are essential to advancing our knowledge about kidney disease. In the last 10 years, clinical trials have helped make breakthroughs in:

- New treatments for kidney disease
- Rare kidney diseases
- Kidney regeneration
- Artificial kidney devices

Gaps in clinical trial participation

To make new treatments that are safe and effective for everyone with kidney disease, clinical trial participants need to reflect the populations who live with kidney disease.

Nearly 1 in 3 people with kidney failure are Black, and Hispanic people are 2x as likely to have kidney failure compared to non-Hispanic people. **However, only 1 in 10 clinical trial participants are Black or Hispanic.**

This means clinical trials do not reflect the real diversity of people with kidney disease, leading to treatments that may not adequately address the needs of the populations living with kidney disease.

Why are there gaps?

People may not join clinical trials for various reasons, such as:

- Lack of trust in the healthcare system due to negative experiences and unethical practices in clinical trials
- Lack of education about clinical trials

What can you do to close this gap?

You can help close this gap by providing a safe space for your patients to learn about clinical trials and to share their questions and concerns. **Start the conversation about clinical trials today.**



How to talk with your patients about clinical trials

The goal is to equip patients to make informed decisions about clinical trials.

Ask what they already know

- “Are you familiar with clinical trials? What do you know about them?”
- “What comes to mind when you hear the term ‘clinical trials?’”
- “Do you know anyone who has been in a clinical trial?”



Tip: If they seem hesitant to discuss trials, take time to listen to their point of view. Pausing and allowing patients to share shows interest, empathy and respect.

Share the who, what and why of clinical trials

If your patient is open to learning more, start a discussion about clinical trials, such as:

- “Clinical trials are a type of research to learn about the safety of a new treatment (such as a new drug, medical procedure or device) and how well it works in people.”
- “I think you could benefit from being in a clinical trial. Would you be open to learning more?”

If you have a specific trial in mind, share the details:

- “[Institution] is doing a clinical trial to learn [purpose].
- Participants will [basic trial activities].
- This will take place [when] and [where].”



Tip: Explain that joining a clinical trial is voluntary and is always their choice. They can also choose to leave at any time for any reason.

Check understanding and encourage questions

Check in throughout the conversation to make sure they understand:

- “What questions do you have about clinical trials?”
- “What would you like me to tell you more about or discuss again?”

Encourage them to ask questions:

- “I would like to hear about any of your concerns. Please feel free to share them with me.”
- “If you have any questions about clinical trials, I am here to help answer them.”



Tip: Talk clearly and slowly. Clinical trials can be complex and some people may need you to explain it more than once.

Resources

Share resources for your patients to learn more on their own time and show them you are listening and addressing their needs.



Here are some resources to share with your patients:

- AKF's companion handout, "Talk with your doctor about clinical trials"



- [AKF's clinical trial page](#)



- [NIH's \(National Institutes of Health\) Clinical Research Trials and You](#)



- [AKF Clinical Trials Myths and Facts](#)



Thank you to our generous sponsor for supporting AKF's work toward health equity in kidney disease.

