Virginia Commonwealth University and VCU Medical Center are endeavoring to bridge bench to bedside. To improve human health, scientific discoveries must be translated into practical applications. Such discoveries typically begin at “the bench” with basic research — in which scientists study disease at a molecular or cellular level — then progress to the clinical level, or the patient’s “bedside.”

Clinical trials is the link between bench and bedside in discovering safer or more effective methods to screen for, prevent, diagnose, or treat diseases.

www.clinicaltrials.vcu.edu

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Questions and answers adapted from Understanding Clinical Trials. ClinicalTrials.gov, and National Institutes of Health Clinical Center. cc.nih.gov

Every Day, A New Discovery.
Frequently asked questions (FAQs) provide information about clinical trials. In addition, it is often helpful to talk to a physician, family members, or friends about deciding to join a trial. After identifying some trial options, the next step is to contact the study research staff and ask questions about specific trials.

www.clinicaltrials.vcu.edu/faq.html

Choosing to participate in a clinical trial is an important personal decision.

What should you consider before participating in a clinical trial?
You should know as much as possible about the clinical trial and feel comfortable asking the members of your healthcare team questions about it. The following questions may be helpful for you to discuss with your healthcare team.

- What is the purpose of the study?
- Why do researchers believe the treatment being tested may be effective?
- Has it been tested before?
- What kinds of tests and experimental treatments are involved?
- How do the possible risks, side effects, and benefits in the study compare with my current treatment?
- How might this trial affect my daily life?
- How long will the trial last?

- Will hospitalization be required?
- Who will pay for the experimental treatment?
- Will I be reimbursed for other expenses?
- What type of long-term follow-up care is part of this study?
- How will I know that the experimental treatment is working?
- Will results of the clinical trial be provided to me?
- Who will be in charge of my care?

How to learn more?
Learn answers to more FAQs and terms commonly used in clinical trials. Search for clinical trials at VCU and VCU Medical Center. New studies are added often, so if you don’t find one that suits you or a loved one, check back again soon.

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