Some Things to Know About Clinical Studies

- Clinical testing only happens after a medication has completed several steps to evaluate its safety and potential efficacy.
- In the US, the FDA requires that a potential therapy be tested before it can be approved to be available for patients with a specific disease or condition.
- Without enough volunteers to participate in a study, the medicine's development may be stalled or even abandoned, and the medicine may never become available.
- Every trial follows an extensive and carefully monitored process that focuses on the safety of the patient who participates.
- All clinical trials have guidelines or eligibility criteria, which determines whether a patient can be part of a trial.
- To determine if you meet the eligibility criteria for a study, the study staff will ask about your medical history and conduct a physical examination.
- Study staff may also need to conduct some preliminary tests, like blood tests, because results of these tests may also qualify you for the study. Your doctor can advise you about the eligibility criteria.

10 questions to ask your doctor about participating in a study:

1. What is the purpose of the study?
2. What is informed consent?
3. Who will pay for treatment during the course of the study?
4. Do I meet the eligibility criteria?
5. What kind of tests will I need?
6. Will I need to discontinue my regular treatments?
7. What are the potential side effects that I can expect and how will I handle them?
8. How will it be determined whether the study treatment is working?
9. Can I leave the study after I join if I want to?
10. How long will the trial last?

Sources:
1. http://www.nih.gov/health/clinicaltrials/basics/accessed January 12/2017
www.ciscrp.org/education-center/important-information/accessed January 12/2017

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