IBS Clinical Trials

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Are clinical studies right for you?

If you suffer from IBS and consider participating in a research study you may wonder about the benefits of getting involved (including the financial aspect), and the type of study you should choose.

Why should you get involved?

Clinical trials designed for IBS could not be accomplished if people like you, who suffer from this condition didn't volunteer. Simply put, your role is essential in helping scientists gain knowledge and improve the health of many IBS patients in the future.

Will you get paid?

The studies conducted by NIH (National Institutes of Health) do pay the participants of the study. You would get paid for your time, and in some cases for the inconvenience of a procedure (for example testing a new drug, getting regular blood tests or other investigations). The amount of money varies from study to study, and is determined by the principal researcher (investigator) of the study. A payment of $600 or more is declared by NIH to the Internal Revenue Service's and you will receive a document called Form 1099-Other Income by mail at the end of the year.

If you have debts to the federal government, note that the compensation may not become available to you as it can be garnished.

Not all studies are created equally

Two of the main goals of IBS clinical trials are to determine the safety and efficacy of a new drug. There are a few ways this is done.

For example, some studies will compare a new drug with a placebo (dummy pills). These pills are harmless pills that look just like a normal pill, but have no active substance in it. To avoid bias, and therefore increase the accuracy of the results the patient, and sometimes the medical staff as well, will not be told if the drug being administered is real or a placebo. Furthermore, some studies will be randomized, single or double blind studies.

When a study is randomized, there will be two or more alternative treatments which are selected randomly, not by choice. One treatment or another is given to the subjects, and the results are compared. When a treatment is found better (i.e. safer, more efficient), the clinical trial is stopped, so the subjects who get the least effective/safe treatment will have less exposure to the treatment.

In single or double blind studies the subject doesn't know which treatment is being used. In single blind studies only the patient is unaware of the drug, while in double blind studies neither the doctors (or medical staff), nor the

participant knows which drug has been prescribed – the only ones who know are the pharmacists. Obviously, the double blind studies are less biased than the single blind studies. Note that randomized, blind studies typically take longer time to be completed, therefore consider your availability to participate in these studies.

Other considerations

Read carefully the complete package and the documents provided by the research team. There you will find valuable information about possible risks associated with the drugs/investigations used during the study.