



HEALTH AWARENESS

What Clinical Trials Can Mean To You

(NAPSA)—Today, more than 10 million cancer survivors are living in the U.S. and many of them may owe their survival to other people with cancer who took part in clinical trials before them. The advances in cancer treatment over the past 30 years have resulted from the clinical trials that test cancer therapies.

According to the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), a leading international professional society representing more than 20,000 practicing oncologists, it is the oncologist's role to help patients who want to participate find an appropriate, high-quality clinical trial.

ASCO defines a high-quality clinical trial as one that outlines all of its steps and elements in writing. This trial plan must be reviewed and receive oversight from an Institutional Review Board, consistent with federal laws. It must undergo scientific review by a group of independent, qualified experts.

Each phase of a clinical trial provides different information. Different phases show the appropriate dose, the safety of the treatment being researched and how well it works. Phase I trials are designed specifically to test what dose of medicine is safe to use and the best way to administer the new treatment.

The goal of a phase II trial is to prove that the new drug or treatment is effective in treating cancer. If that is the case, the research proceeds to a phase III trial. A phase III trial determines how the new treatment compares to the current standard of care.

After a trial has been completed and provided sufficient evidence of benefit, the sponsor can submit an application to the U.S.



Clinical trials have led to many of the discoveries now keeping cancer patients alive.

Food and Drug Administration for approval. But clinical trials are only successful when patients take part.

"Patients are the real heroes in this process—they provide the gift of information that helps us understand whether a new treatment is useful," said Margaret Tempero, MD, deputy director at the University of California-San Francisco Comprehensive Cancer Center and past president of ASCO.

Trials are conducted under rigorous scientific and ethical safeguards. Participants receive either the current standard of care or a new treatment believed to be superior. Placebo-controlled trials are very rare and always used in conjunction with the best available care.

To learn more about clinical trials, visit ASCO's patient information Web site, People Living With Cancer, at: www.PLWC.org/ClinicalTrials.

The following resources can also help you find more information on clinical trials: www.ClinicalTrials.gov, www.Cancer.gov, www.CancerTrialsHelp.org.