

Understanding Informed Consent in Clinical Trials



What Is Informed Consent?

Informed consent is the process of learning about a clinical trial before you decide whether to participate. It ensures you understand the purpose of the study, the possible risks and benefits, and your rights as a participant. Informed consent is not just a form you sign — it is an ongoing conversation between you and the research team.

“**Informed**” means you are given clear information about the study.

“**Consent**” means you voluntarily agree to participate.

What Information Will Be Shared?

- The purpose of the study
- What treatment or procedures are involved
- How long the study will last
- Possible risks and side effects
- Possible benefits (if any)
- Other treatment options available to you
- Costs and what insurance may cover
- How your privacy will be protected

Example of Informed Consent in Action

Lisa is considering a clinical trial for Stage IV lung cancer. The research team explains the study. They review possible side effects, how often she will need scans, and that she may receive either the new drug or the current standard treatment.

Lisa asks questions about side effects and travel requirements. She takes the consent form home to review with her family. After feeling comfortable with the information, she chooses to participate.

This is informed consent — understanding the details and making a voluntary decision.

Important Reminder

Signing a consent form does NOT mean you are locked into the study. You may withdraw at any time. Informed consent continues throughout the trial — if new information becomes available, the research team must share it with you.