

As discussed in the previous article, there are a number of ways in which research participants are protected, but additionally all potential volunteers must meet very specific criteria to qualify for a study. The use of inclusion/exclusion criteria is an important principle of clinical research that helps to produce reliable results and keep participants safe. Some examples of these criteria are: gender, age, type of medical condition, prior medication/treatment, and severity of the medical condition. Screening for these criteria usually occurs first over the phone and then again in much greater detail during the patient's screening visit. If a potential research patient meets the necessary criteria, the question still remains why should that person volunteer to participate?

There are a number of reasons why people participate in research. Many simply would like to help advance modern medicine, and their participation is vital in obtaining the knowledge to improve the health care for countless people. Others desire to take a more active role in their own health care, and by participating in research they may receive investigational treatments not available to the general public. There are also those who are frustrated with existing treatments and hope to find greater success with new medication. For some people participating in research is a means of obtaining more and better medical attention for a specific health condition than they would otherwise receive. Volunteers also receive all of their clinic visits, lab assessments, medical exams and study medication free of charge. Typically volunteers also receive compensation for their time and travel, so not only may there be health benefits for participating in research, but financial ones as well.

(To be continued)

To learn more about medical research and what studies are currently enrolling participants please visit the website of Horizons Clinical Research Center, LLC www.horizonscr.com or call 303-399-4067.