

North Central Cancer Treatment Group



*Working with
Mayo Clinic
to Bring the
Latest Cancer
Treatment to
the Community*



NCCTG

Dedicated to you



More than 1.3 million people in the United States will be diagnosed with cancer this year. If you or a loved one are a cancer patient, you want to know that you are getting the best treatment available.

The physicians and researchers among the clinic and hospital members of the North Central Cancer Treatment Group (NCCTG) are part of an international network of cancer research and treatment clinics dedicated to bringing the most up-to-date cancer treatments to their patients.

NCCTG includes more than 1,200 physicians and researchers at more than 375 treatment locations throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico. Each year, approximately 3,000 patients are enrolled in NCCTG clinical trials.

NCCTG offers the patient:

- A network of knowledgeable physicians, researchers and allied health staff who collaborate on the development and conduct of clinical trials for cancer treatment
- Access to hundreds of cancer clinical trials for most types of cancer
- State-of-the-art cancer treatment and support services near or in your community

NCCTG – a history of serving cancer patients in their communities


The North Central Cancer Treatment Group (NCCTG) is a national research network of cancer specialists. Founded in 1977, NCCTG began in the north central United States and now extends across the country into Canada and Mexico.

NCCTG was founded on the premise that cancer care in the United States occurs primarily in the community practice setting. Consequently, the community is the most appropriate venue to conduct clinical trials to test novel approaches to cancer prevention and treatment and to offer cutting-edge care to a broader spectrum of patients.

Since NCCTG began, over 60,000 patients have participated in NCCTG clinical trials. Over the past 27 years, NCCTG physicians and researchers have conducted clinical trials that have strengthened their understanding of cancer and cancer treatment. This knowledge has led to the development of better treatments that have improved the quality of life for cancer patients and helped many patients live longer.

*Mayo Clinic serves as the
NCCTG research base*

Mayo Clinic Cancer Center serves as the research base for NCCTG, providing clinical and laboratory research expertise. More than 200 Mayo Clinic physicians and Ph.D. scientists actively participate in all stages of NCCTG research, including clinical trial development, treatment and data analysis. In addition, Mayo Clinic Cancer Center provides centralized statistical and operations support for the NCCTG network, coordinating the administration and data analysis for all NCCTG clinical trials.



NCCTG maintains strong relationships with government agencies and industry

NCCTG is part of the U.S. government's National Cancer Program. NCCTG receives financial and scientific support from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). As one of several cooperative groups around the country, NCCTG works to design and conduct clinical trials to answer important research questions.

In addition, NCCTG receives support from pharmaceutical companies who are developing new cancer treatments. These partners may collaborate in protocol development, provide chemotherapy and other medications at no charge to patients and provide financial support to conduct clinical trials.

The role of clinical trials

A clinical trial is the study of a new medical treatment in human subjects. While new treatments are studied in the laboratory, they cannot be made available to all cancer patients until they have been proven to be safe and effective.

NCCTG offers patients the opportunity to participate in clinical trials of new cancer treatments. Some types or stages of cancer are very difficult to treat effectively. When the best standard treatment has not controlled the cancer, when it does not offer a strong possibility of cure or when a new treatment may improve the outcome, patients at NCCTG clinics and hospitals may be offered the choice to participate in a clinical trial.

Clinical trials are specifically directed toward:

- Improving chances of cure
- Increasing life expectancy
- Improving quality of life

Strict ethical guidelines

NCCTG clinical trial research is conducted according to strict scientific and ethical principles. All NCCTG clinical trials are rigorously reviewed before beginning patient enrollment. Every clinical trial has a protocol that describes what will be done in the study, how it will be conducted and why each part of the study is necessary. All physicians and research centers taking part in the trial use the same protocol.

Before each trial begins, cancer specialists and an independent group, the Protocol Review Committee from the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, review all clinical trial protocols. Each trial goes to NCI for review approval and then to local review boards at each NCCTG member institution for an extensive evaluation.

These reviews assure that the clinical trial is conducted according to sound ethical principles, including protection of patient confidentiality. The clinical trial begins once all groups reviewing the trial give their approval.

Once the clinical trial is under way, results are monitored regularly to assure the safety and effectiveness of the treatment.

Becoming a clinical trial participant

Your physician will tell you if treatment through a clinical trial is an option for you. Your physician will discuss:

- Possible benefits from treatment
- Related risks, side effects and practical problems
- Other treatment options
- Financial considerations
- Contact information

You decide whether to participate in a clinical trial. Whatever your decision, you will continue to receive the best medical care possible.

Treatment during a clinical trial

If you choose to participate in a clinical trial, you will receive state-of-the-art treatment in a safe and caring setting. Your treatment could include:

- Surgery
- Chemotherapy (cancer medications)
- Radiation therapy
- Hormone therapy
- Biological therapy

You may need one or more of these treatments depending on the cancer you have, where it started and whether it has spread.

All of these treatments are available at NCCTG clinics and hospitals. Cancer specialists (medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons and pathologists) use appropriate medical tests to learn the exact nature of your cancer. Your physician will suggest clinical trials that are most appropriate for your condition.

Care and support during a clinical trial

While participating in a NCCTG clinical trial, you will be followed by a team of health care professionals that includes your local physician, clinical research associate and nurse coordinators. During your treatment, these specialists will consult regularly with the health care team at NCCTG's research base, Mayo Clinic. Your local health care staff are available to address questions or concerns that you may have during treatment.



During a clinical trial, your progress will be monitored closely. While cure and prolonging life are the main goals of cancer treatment, NCCTG physicians and nurses also are concerned with each patient's quality of life and make special efforts to relieve symptoms and reduce discomfort related to treatments.

Advancing cancer knowledge

Clinical trials provide an opportunity to expand the body of knowledge about cancer treatments. As a clinical trial participant, you are contributing to the advancement of cancer care for patients like yourself, now and in the future.



Frequently asked questions

Will I be a guinea pig?

Absolutely not. As a clinical trial participant, you will receive state-of-the-art treatment in a safe, caring setting. Each treatment has undergone rigorous evaluation to insure safety and effectiveness. Your physician will discuss with you in advance the risks and benefits of participating in the clinical trial.

A team of health care professionals oversees your treatment and pays special attention to your physical health as well as your quality of life during the clinical trial. Physicians and nurses are always available to answer questions you may have. Providing you with the best medical care is the first priority in a clinical trial.

How are clinical trials conducted?

Clinical trials are usually conducted in three phases. Treatment clinical trials listed in Physician Data Query (PDQ®), the NCI's cancer information database, are always assigned a phase.

- **Phase I trials** are the first step in testing a new treatment in humans. Researchers evaluate what dose is safe, how a medication should be given (by mouth or injected into a vein or muscle), and how often it should be given.
- **Phase II trials** study the safety and effectiveness of a medication or treatment and examine how it affects the body.
- **Phase III trials** compare the new treatment method to the current standard therapy.

What are my rights if I take part in a study?

The decision to participate in a clinical trial is entirely your decision. You can stop participating in a clinical trial at any time. Your physician may end your participation in a clinical trial at any time if it is in your best interest or

if the study is stopped. You will be told of important new findings or any changes in the study. Your identity is protected; data from the study may be published, but your name and other information will not be used without your permission.

Why should I participate in a clinical trial?

As a clinical trial participant, you will have access to state-of-the-art treatments that often are not available to the general public. The approach being studied may be more effective than the standard approach. During a clinical trial, you will receive regular and careful medical attention from a research team that includes physicians and other health care professionals.

As a clinical trial participant, you may be the first to benefit from the new method being studied. Studies show that people who participate in clinical trials tend to do better than if they had not participated. You may gain satisfaction knowing that you are contributing to the improvement of cancer treatments and helping countless patients in the future.

NCCTG patient advocates

Patient advocacy is an integral part of NCCTG. Patient advocates are people committed to helping cancer patients through the diagnosis, treatment and recovery processes. These advocates may be cancer survivors or caregivers who choose to help others through the stages of cancer treatment. Some advocates are professionals, such as nurses or social workers, whose duties include facilitating better care, education and information for cancer patients.

Patient advocates:

- Attend scientific meetings
- Review clinical trial protocols
- Make presentations to interested groups of scientists and clinicians
- Represent patient interests and maintain a close relationship with NCCTG physicians and researchers
- Support patients and families participating in clinical trials

Patient advocates are available for individual, family and group meetings, and community presentations about the role of clinical trials in cancer care.

Giving for the future

A financial gift to NCCTG allows you to help others by supporting research and education essential for high-quality patient care. A special contribution in your name, or the name of a loved one, can create a lasting memorial.

If you wish to make a gift to support cancer research, the North Central Cancer Treatment Group has a special fund for research and education. There also may be a special fund for research programs and projects within your community. Please ask your physician how you can help promote cancer research.



Contact NCCTG

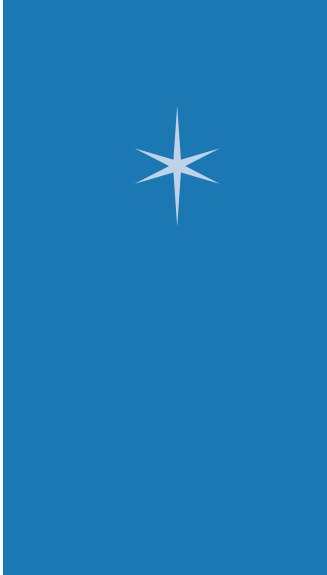
For further information about NCCTG, including a list of members and a map of site locations:

Contact:

- NCCTG Operations Office
200 First Street SW
Rochester, MN 55905
507-284-1902
- Visit the NCCTG Web site at
<http://ncctg.mayo.edu>

For more information on clinical trials:

- National Cancer Institute
<http://www.nci.nih.gov/clinicaltrials>
- Coalition of National Cancer Cooperative Groups
<http://www.cancertrialshelp.org>



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