



## DIVERSITY IN CLINICAL TRIALS EQUALS BETTER TREATMENTS FOR EVERYONE.

People respond differently to medical treatments. That is why diverse and inclusive participation in clinical trials is needed to ensure that treatments are safe and effective for more people living with a given disease. Visit [medicalheroes.org](https://medicalheroes.org) to learn more.

A sincere thank you from these sponsors to everyone who participates in clinical research:



# Why DIVERSITY in Clinical Trials Matters

Advertorial

Clinical trials are a critical part of the research process for new medicines and vaccines. The information gained is fundamental to the development of new ways to help treat and prevent disease. Evidence has shown that some drugs and vaccines show variations in the response to some individuals depending on their racial or genetic background. For this reason, it is important that volunteer participants of clinical trials appropriately reflect the people that the investigational medicine or vaccine is intending to treat.

Our company, Merck, and many others, are working to ensure that volunteer participants from diverse backgrounds are included in clinical trials. Why is this so important? Age, gender, weight, race, or ethnicity might change how individuals respond to a treatment. By including people with varied traits and characteristics, research can provide important information to understand how treatments work in a diverse population.

There are many reasons why people volunteer for clinical trials – and many reasons they choose not to. In the United States, past medical mistreatment made some people distrust science and medicine. Financial or travel issues can also make it hard for people to join research trials. Too often, all those worries combined prevent people from volunteering.

That's why we're trying to make it easier for all volunteer participants.

### The importance of diversity in cancer research

Diversity in clinical research is especially important in cancer research because the impact of cancer can be very different among diverse groups of people. For

example, the American Cancer Society says prostate cancer is increasing. It also is 70% more common among Black men than White men in the United States. It's important then that Black men are also a big part of research into the disease and the evaluation of investigational treatments.

### Improving diversity in trials by reaching people in underrepresented communities

We need to do a better job engaging people in underrepresented communities and help them understand what participation in a clinical trial involves. Then we need to help those with challenges, like being too far from a trial or having financial concerns.

Partnerships with local organizations – groups who know their people best -- can help. We're also running our trials in more areas. Last year, about half of our clinical trial locations were placed in areas where underrepresented groups live to meet them where they are.

We recognize that there are things we can do to improve the clinical trial experience for volunteer participants, such as providing travel to and from clinical sites for their study appointments.

We know people often feel more comfortable with doctors and medical professionals who look like them too. So, we're working to improve the diversity of clinical researchers. Plus, we're creating tools to help health care professionals engage their patients about participating in trials.

We're training more people to help volunteer participants through the clinical trial process called Patient Navigators. Patient Navigators can work with patients and medical staff as a go-between. We're also looking at how to run trials

so that some aspects may be easier for volunteer participants, like using telemedicine.

### Working together to improve clinical research

We have a lot more to do, but we're seeing progress. In 2022, we enrolled about 50 percent more diverse volunteer participants in our trials. It's positive momentum we are working hard to grow, to make sure clinical research is an option for everyone.

You can help. Be open to learning more about clinical trials. Every trial has risks and benefits, and participation is completely optional and voluntary. You can stop at any time. Volunteer participants get to be active in their health and help advance medical research for everyone.



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