

Cancer Advances: A Majority of Americans Would Consider Participating in Cancer Clinical Trials

From the March 1, 2003 issue of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* [Read the Study](#) [1] For some people living with cancer, clinical trials can represent the best hope of effective therapy. Clinical trials are also responsible for significant advances in cancer treatment over the last 30 years. However, less than 5% of adult cancer patients in the United States participate in clinical trials. A new study, however, has found that a clear majority of Americans - 70% - would consider participating in a cancer clinical trial if asked. Led by Dr. Robert Comis, of the Coalition of the National Cancer Cooperative Groups, researchers interviewed 1,000 Americans aged 18 and older to assess their attitudes toward participating in a cancer clinical trial. Thirty-two percent of the respondents said they would be very willing to participate in a cancer clinical trial if asked, and another 38% would be inclined to participate. According to Dr. Comis, the fact that many Americans would consider participating in cancer clinical trials is an encouraging sign for the future of cancer research, since clinical trials are the best way to improve care for patients. Dr. Comis also noted that although many Americans would consider participating in cancer clinical trials, there are a number of barriers that prevent cancer patients from participating. For example, some cancer patients are unable to participate because their insurance company does not cover the costs associated with clinical trials or because they fail to meet a trial's strict eligibility criteria. Other patients cannot enroll because doctors are often not adequately reimbursed for participating in clinical trials. Dr. Comis believes the cancer community must address these barriers if more patients are to enroll in cancer clinical trials in the future. **What Does This Mean For Patients?** Patients should feel comfortable discussing the option of a clinical trial with their physician to learn if there is one that is right for them. At any one time, there are many clinical trials available, and your doctor will be able to help you evaluate the option of participating in one.

Links:

[1] <http://www.jco.org/cgi/content/abstract/21/5/830>