Clinical Trials: Who Needs Them?

Can clinical trials really make a difference? Some people think something they call “the practice of medicine” is good enough. They say the doctor is the expert and they can tell what works without expensive research. **Being a great doctor is important and so is being an excellent researcher.** Very few people can be both simultaneously. Both professions are full-time jobs. **Patients get confused because they start to expect research to be medical care and it is not.** Research is set up to test safety and effectiveness of interventions so doctors can use them to practice medicine. I assert that it takes the best of medicine, research and science to build the most effective innovations and to suggest we can work better together combining expertise than any one person trying to do it all.

Are You a Guinea Pig or Patient to Your Doctor?

When doctors fail to separate speculative research from the treatment and caring for their patients the power of medicine is weakened. You can spot this kind of business where boundaries are blurred because they use **patient video testimonials and narrative papers to vet their work instead of doing real research** and sound clinical trials and they charge patients money for conducting research on them. When they are called to account for patient safety or effectiveness they call those of us that believe trials are important callous and uncaring and ask what would you do if it was you or someone you love that was without hope?
**Embracing Personalized Medicine**

Most people love the idea of personalized medicine. We all want to be seen as more than a number. Much of the best medicine that is later personalized in terms of dosage and method started out by working for many people not just one. Some argue that trials are only for drugs, they are expensive, take a long time and that they drive up the cost of medicine. **Many very sick patients can’t get into a trial** because the complications make it too hard for researchers to see if the intervention is causing a problem or if there was a pre-existing issue. **Doctors who don’t want to expose their treatments to a real test of research prey on these patients.**

**What can happen in 20 minutes?**

Those that oppose trials like to treat private pay and say the people they treat are special. They say they are capable of devising an individual scientific intervention for each one because one size does not fit all. Let’s be realistic though...how much thinking and individualization can happen in appointments that are booked less than twenty minutes apart?

**The following 8 minute video will show how Clinical Trials have helped medicine advance**

Can medicine without research contain the expertise to solve problems medicine has grappled with for years? We can look at how effective medicine without trials is by thinking about the advances in medicine that have taken place since clinical trials became a part of the real practice of medicine. **Real doctors want the best for all patients not just the ones with money that can afford to pay out-of-pocket.** Clinical trials let insurance companies, regulators and government bodies see which treatments work and are worth the investment.

**You can learn more about clinical trials in these posts**
• http://www.ithinkwell.org/the-public-can-understand-research-trials-and-share-decision-making
• http://www.ithinkwell.org/can-patients-get-research-they-deserve
• http://www.ithinkwell.org/its-ok-to-ask-clinical-trials-questions-at-thinkwell