New Drugs for Arthritis

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Getting Involved in OA Research: Questions to Ask

In recent decades, there has been a strong emphasis on surgery for individuals with Osteoarthritis who did not respond well to medication. Currently, more than 600,000 knee replacements are performed every year in the United States; an annual increase of 162% from 1991 to 2010.

However, a 2014 study featured in “Arthritis and Rheumatology” suggests that approximately one third of these surgeries were “inappropriate”. These surgeries had a higher than expected rate of failure, and were associated with knee pain and functional loss.

Your doctor may want to focus on medication to control OA symptoms as opposed to focusing on surgery. You may learn about participating in a research study.

Considerations

There are thousands of clinical studies conducted each year, in various locations like hospitals, medical clinics, universities, clinical research sites or private medical offices. Before participating in a clinical trial, talk to your doctor and ask the following questions:

What do healthcare professionals say is involved in the study? I’d like as many details as possible.

What is the goal of the trial? I need to know whether or not the goals of this study reflect my own.

Does the study involve a placebo? During a placebo controlled trial, the participants are divided into two groups- one group will receive the drug, while the second group will receive a dummy pill and the results will be compared.

Is the drug already available for use on the market? I need to know whether this drug is brand new.

The doctor will help you to better understand the drug that’s being research. *How will this medication be administered to me (oral form, injection, etc.) and for how long (what is the duration of the study and the necessary follow ups, etc.)?*

Drugs undergo at least three phases of studies before being approved by the FDA. If the drug had gone through previous testing, ask about the results.

What are the benefits of trying this drug? What are the possible side effects?

What will be required of me as a participant in this study? How often will I have to visit the clinic, and what types of tests will be performed during these visits?

Can I visit my own GP during the study? Can I continue using the drug after the trial is completed?

Will I have to pay for any part of this study? The cost associated with a study and treatment is important. If insurance covers costs it may include transportation to the clinic, parking, childcare and other costs that may occur. Many of these studies compensate you for your time.

What are the expertise and backgrounds of the medical team involved in the study? Do they have financial interests in the trial?

For more information about getting involved in a study visit:

What Participants Need to Know About Clinical Trials