What You Need to Know About Ovarian Cancer Research Studies

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Participating in Ovarian Cancer Research Studies

If you decide to participate in a clinical trial or ovarian cancer research study, you have the option to become part of a study that will evaluate the efficacy of a drug for ovarian cancer. It's likely that the drug will be Olaparib and Niraparib, as many research centers across US will be testing these drugs over the next few years.

Where to Start

Centerwatch.com is a leading and trusted source of clinical trial information for both patients and health care professionals. On the website you can find updated information about research projects in progress, and more additional information such as educational videos about research and various health topics.

Once you decide which study you'd like to participate in, you can learn details about the study like their status (whether or not they are currently recruiting patients), the goal of the study (which drug or procedure is being tested), compensation you may receive for your participation in the study as well as contact info.

It would be wise to speak with your GP and specialist to see if and how you may benefit from the drugs that are being researched before you agree to get enrolled. The informed consent will provide in-depth information about the process of being involved as a participant, the risks and benefits of the treatment and any other relevant information.

Do your Own Research

Let's look at Olaparib (Lynparza), as our example. As of August 2014, it is still an experimental drug. AstraZeneca, the manufacturer of this drug, showed hopeful results. Many studies conducted in recent years have submitted a request to accelerate the approval of this drug, which was denied by the FDA in June 2014.

When the FDA rejects a drug, and its status is still in the experimental phase, you have to participate in a clinical trial or go through the Expanded Access Program to use it.

Learn about the Drug

- **Efficacy:** Olaparib belongs to a class of drugs called an Inhibitor of poly ADP ribose polymerase (PARP), an enzyme involved in DNA repair. It showed promising results (efficacy) in individuals with hereditary BRCA 1 and BRCA 2 mutations diagnosed in many ovarian, breast and prostate cancer. For details about the efficacy review the following document from the FDA:
- **Safety:** during testing in clinical trials, Olaparib was linked with frequent mild adverse reactions such as nausea, fatigue, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea and anemia. The participants using this drug also experienced more infections and respiratory conditions compared with placebo group. Death of the patients occurred "very rarely" based on an official report by the FDA.

Other Considerations

If you decide to enroll in a study and test a new drug, carefully evaluate the risks and benefits. If you don’t feel comfortable trying an experimental drug, see if other research studies evaluate drugs for ovarian cancer that have already been approved by the FDA, such as Carboplatin, Paclitaxel, Gemcitabine, Pegylated Liposomal Doxorubicin or Topotecan.