

Research study

A research study is a scientific way to improve or develop new methods of health care. Studies are designed to answer specific questions on how to prevent, diagnose, or treat diseases and disorders. Many types of research studies exist. For example, clinical trials test new medicines or devices. Other studies use interviews or surveys to understand health or behavior.

WHY ARE RESEARCH STUDIES IMPORTANT? Research studies are important because they contribute to knowledge and progress on diseases and disorders. Research is the fastest and safest way to find treatments that work. That's why the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC have created the Research Participant Registry.

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT REGISTRY?

The Research Participant Registry is a voluntary database of people who are willing to consider participation in research studies and share their medical records for the purposes of advancing research and medical care. Its goal is to bring the advancements of medical research faster, and more directly to those who can benefit. The Research Participant Registry is a joint effort between the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC.

WHAT TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS ARE NEEDED? Research studies need participants of all ages, genders, races, and ethnic groups. Some studies need healthy participants, while other studies need people with specific health problems.

The most important step in conducting a high-quality [research study](#) is to create a [study question](#) that will provide the guidance for the planning, analysis, and reporting of your study. The process of generating a novel, answerable study question seems like it should be simple at first blush. Perhaps your keen interest in a particular topic sparks an idea for a study that starts the creative process of hypothesizing and wondering "what if." It is a wonderful experience to witness or be caught up in the joys of such a process. Finding inspiration for a study may, however, be a challenge, and the study idea emerges, instead, with time after thoughtful consideration of a topic. In either scenario, in order for you to design and execute your study, honing your idea and hypothesis into questions that can be realistically studied is required, adding a level of complexity to what at first seemed simple.

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