

The Treatment of Challenging Skin Conditions

A LOCAL DERMATOLOGIST LOOKS FOR ANSWERS TO TREATING PROBLEMATIC SKIN CONDITIONS WITH THE HELP OF CLINICAL TRIALS.

Research of medications in dermatology has been growing for the last 10 years and more than ever before. Many skin disorders became clinically associated with our immune system and thus, treating skin has turned into a systemic treatment in the form of oral agents or injections. Furthermore, it seems like we hear much more about psoriasis and dermatitis, and it is not only due to the celebrity advertising. There are now support groups and professional foundations actively assisting patients through the Internet connection, in finding more details about their diseases and treatment options.

It is also unfortunate that our society, being so aesthetically sensitive, developed a lot of predeterminations causing further psychological problems in individuals with visible skin conditions. It is often what we hear in the treatment rooms from our own patients who seek medical assistance for their skin, but also want to know how to educate those around them about their disease. We've heard stories of firing and job loss over psoriasis on one's hands far too often.

Treatments of skin conditions can be long-term and costly. Often, like in psoriasis, treatment must continue for years and practically never stops. It is critical for us as a community to provide more safe and effective ways of treatment, allowing patients with psoriasis to achieve a normal professional and personal life. It is also our responsibility as a society to make sure that new drugs coming to the pharmacy do exactly that.

One of the ways of taking that responsibility is to actively participate in clinical trials that are the only form of the final drug development. Simply, there is no new medication on the market unless the pharmaceutical company found a doctor-investigator, who, with his medical knowledge and through his own practice, undertook an effort of running a clinical study, and identifying if and how the new drug is working.

Studies are conducted in phases and the final phase 3 portion of studies must be completed be-

fore the pharmaceutical company can submit an application for a new drug's approval. Being a part of that final phase provides patients with medical care and treatment at no cost in return for allowing the sharing of clinical data and outcomes of treatment with the developing company and the FDA. It is only clinical data that needs to be shared and thus, all personal information is strictly confidential.

Responsible doctors-investigators perform all the procedures according to a specific protocol and they follow general research guidance known as GCP, or Good Clinical Practice. In such a way, through an active participation, patients with particular disorders can become partners in development of the new drug rather than final product users only.

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Those long, small print inserts you can find in every medication prescribed are exactly the short-form results from clinical trials done on a given medication. Many patients neglect to read them due to a difficult and often difficult to comprehend language.

Reading them, however, is critical and can save lives.

If you would like to learn more about your community-level run clinical research trials, please call Dr. Bukhalo and his staff at 847 392 5440. The research team will be happy to answer general and disorder specific questions about your options.

Please, remember that your participation and involvement is free and does not require any insurance information. We are pleased to serve our community Monday through Saturday.

MICHAEL BUKHALO, MD

ALTMAN DERMATOLOGY



Dr. Michael Bukhalo has been working as a principal investigator in pharmaceutical clinical research for over 10 years. He and his staff participated in the development of many skin topical medications and biologics in the treatment of immune system disorders related to skin. Dr. Bukhalo received his medical degree from University of Illinois in Chicago and his dermatologic residency at the State University of New York in Buffalo, N.Y. He has been practicing medical dermatology in Arlington Heights since 2004 and is a co-owner of Altman Dermatology Associates. Dr. Bukhalo lives in Arlington Heights and enjoys traveling with his wife and three daughters.

Altman Dermatology's board-certified dermatologists treat a variety of skin conditions including psoriasis, skin cancer, chronic skin disease, and aging. To learn more about the dermatological services provided at Altman Dermatology Associates, or to discuss participation in clinical trials, contact:

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