

Activity 3 Making complex and difficult decisions

Activity sheet

Below is a summary of three patients who are being considered for the DrugX clinical trial. Using the DrugX clinical trial criteria, identify which patient should be selected to go forward for the trial. You can do this by circling the observations in the patient data table that make two of the patients ineligible.

Patients

Patient A is a female patient, just turned 18 years old. She has just passed her driving test and is studying for 1 BTEC and 2 A-levels in sport, drama and biology. She has a 14-year old sister and her parents are both teachers. She has difficulty breathing during and after any exercise. She struggles to climb stairs and relies heavily on driving to get around.

Patient B is a female patient who is 72 years old. She is a widow and lives on her own. She has no children and regularly attends the outpatient clinic on her own. She has an older brother who lives in a care home.

Patient C is a female patient who is 32. She has recently given birth to her first baby after several attempts at IVF. She has been married for 5 years and moved into her first home about 1 year ago. She is a qualified accountant.

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Patient data table

Physiological observation	Patient A	Patient B	Patient C
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Red blood cell count	5.6	5.1	3.8
White blood cell count	6.2	5.9	10.0
Respiratory test	Fail	Fail	Fail
Have they had cancer before?	No	No	Yes
Electrocardiogram (ECG)	Normal	Normal	Not normal
Diabetes	No	Type II	No
Age	18	72	32
Pre-existing allergies	Yes – to silver	No	No
Pregnant?	No	No	No
Resting Blood pressure	Systolic = 150 Diastolic = 80	Systolic = 125 Diastolic = 86	Systolic = 133 Diastolic = 70

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Clinical trial criteria

Physiological observation	Criteria to be accepted onto trial	Notes
Red blood cell count	Within normal range 4.5 to 6.5 trillion cells/L (men) 3.8 to 5.8 trillion cells/L (women)	
White blood cell count	Within normal range 4 to 11 trillion cells/L (men and women)	
Respiratory test	Pass or Fail (Patients who fail the tests will be accepted)	
Have they had cancer before?	Patient must not have had any type of cancer before	There may be contraindications with the clinical trial drug so the patients must not have had cancer before
Electrocardiogram (ECG)	Must be normal	The drug may interfere with the electrical activity of the heart, so a patient's ECG trace must be normal
Diabetes	Patients without diabetes or with Type II diabetes can be accepted	The treatments used for diabetes may interfere with the clinical trial drug, so it is important to know if the patient has this condition
Age	Over 30	The trial is looking at whether the drug may work more effectively in an older age group
Pre-existing allergies	Allergies to silver are not permitted onto the trial	The clinical trial drug may have molecules that cause allergies
Pregnant?	Pregnant patients are not allowed onto the trial	Drugs can cross the placenta and affect the baby, so no pregnant women can be accepted on the trial
Resting blood pressure	Systolic, no higher than 145 Diastolic no higher than 90	The patient's blood pressure may change with the treatment, so we need them to have normal blood pressure to begin with