

From Data to Diversity: Examining Clinical Trial Participation Trends in Gastrointestinal Cancer Research

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Clinical trial participation among women and minority patients with gastrointestinal cancer has gained attention due to concerns about representation and equity. Despite the pivotal role of clinical trials in advancing cancer treatment, disparities persist in the demographic diversity of trial participants.

To evaluate the representation of marginalized groups and address equity in clinical trials, we analyzed a dataset from Southwest Oncology Group (SWOG) trials conducted between 2011 and 2021. Our objective was to understand the demographic diversity, particularly among race, age, sex, and location, among patients with gastrointestinal cancer participating in these trials.

Our analysis of clinical trial participation among patients with gastrointestinal cancer revealed key findings. Data on approximately 1,500 participants over the past decade showed significant disparities: 69% were male, 84% were white, 81% were non-Hispanic, and the average age was 58.88 years. There was also a high frequency of private insurance among participants. We conducted an examination of one specific study within the dataset, analyzing the demographics of participants with a focus on race, age, sex, and insurance coverage. This analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of the individuals participating in SWOG trials for gastrointestinal cancer and underscored the need for more inclusive trial designs.

Overall, our results highlight the importance of addressing disparities in clinical trial participation to ensure that research findings are beneficial to all patients, regardless of background. By identifying barriers to participation, we can work towards promoting equity and inclusivity in cancer research and improving outcomes for individuals affected by gastrointestinal cancer.