

The
Skin
Hospital

SKIN & CANCER FOUNDATION

AUSTRALIA

NEWS August 2024

**Why are
clinical trials
important?**



Q&A

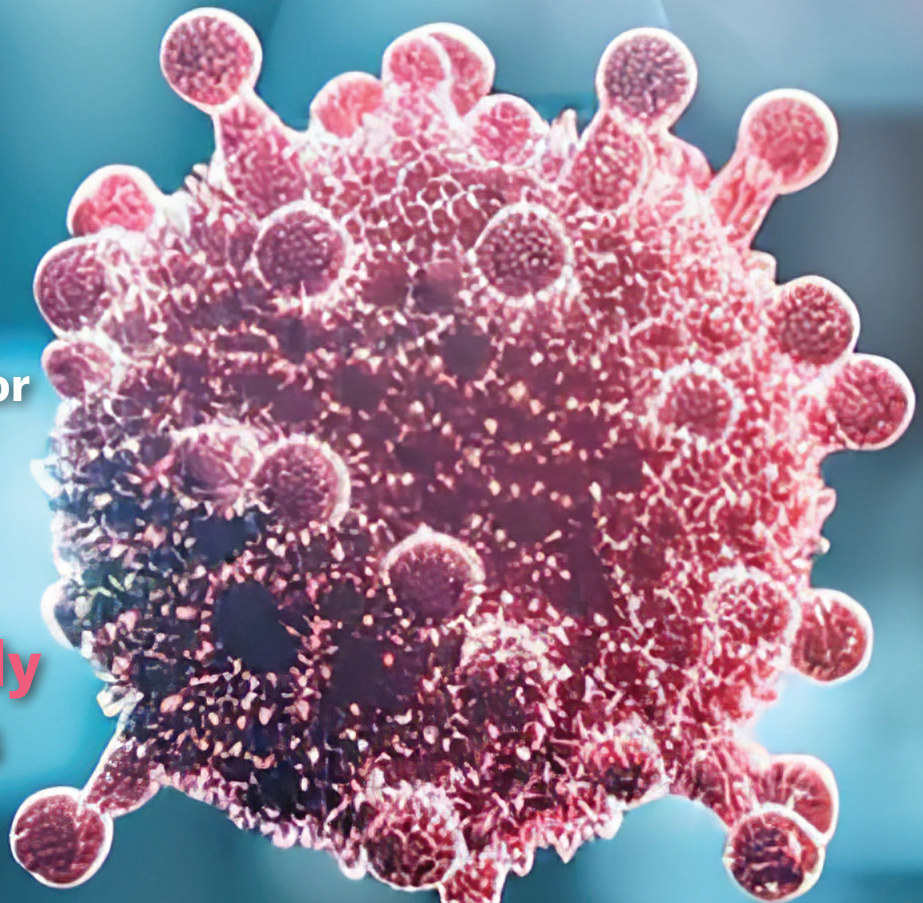
with Associate Professor
John Frew

**New and currently
recruiting trials**

Clinical Trials & Research

an update from The Skin Hospital's Team

SPECIAL EDITION from Clinical Trials & Research





Welcome from **Georgie Blundell**

CEO at The Skin Hospital

This special edition newsletter from The Skin Hospital is dedicated to sharing the vital work conducted by our team in Clinical Trials & Research. As a not-for-profit organisation with charity status, our purpose is to benefit and treat those who suffer from skin conditions. Our mission is to provide excellent clinical services, education and training, plus clinical trials and research. In this edition, we hope you will gain a strong insight into the important work that is done by our research team.

Associate Professor John Frew (MBBS MMed MS PhD FACD) joined us as Director of Research earlier this year. His expertise is already driving our efforts in clinical trials and dermatological research. Currently, we are conducting eight clinical trials, with four actively recruiting. Three more clinical trials are expected to start in the next six months, which will explore a variety of common dermatological conditions. I hope you enjoy learning more about this work. Detailed information about our clinical trials can be found here: <https://skinhospital.edu.au/clinical-trials/>.

In addition to clinical trials and research, we continue to provide the highest levels of dermatology services to our patients who visit us each day, whilst also training the next generation of dermatologists through our registrar training program. At The Skin Hospital, our busy team of over 55 doctors, including more than 40 dermatologists, are in high demand. They are at the forefront of dermatological training and care, creating a centre of excellence. We continue to lead as a primary training facility for the Australasian College of Dermatologists' registrar training program, which is something we are very proud of.

We hope you enjoy this latest newsletter. I hope you agree that our team is paving the way for future advancements in dermatology and dermatological excellence.

Kind regards,
Georgie Blundell

Q&A

with Associate Professor John Frew

(MBBS MMed MS PhD FACD)

We asked Associate Professor John Frew, a renowned dermatologist and our Director of Research and Clinical Trials, about the importance of clinical trials.

Why are clinical trials important?

Clinical trials are crucial for several reasons. Firstly, they help us to discover new and effective treatments. Through these trials, we can test new drugs, combinations of drugs, and other treatment modalities to determine their efficacy and safety.

Clinical trials also allow us to improve the quality of life for patients by finding ways to manage chronic symptoms more effectively. They provide valuable data on long-term outcomes and potential side effects, helping us to refine and optimise treatment protocols.

Can you explain the process of participating in a clinical trial for someone who might be interested?

Participation typically begins with a screening process to determine if the patient meets the eligibility criteria for the trial. This includes a thorough medical history and physical examination. If eligible, the patient will be provided with detailed information about the trial, including its purpose, duration, procedures, risks, and benefits. Informed consent is obtained before any trial-related activities begin.

Throughout the trial, participants are closely monitored by the research team, and their health and response to treatment are regularly assessed. Patients can withdraw from the trial at any time if they choose.

How is the safety and well-being of participants ensured during these studies?

Safety is a top priority in clinical trials. All trials must follow strict regulatory guidelines and are overseen by ethics committees to ensure they are conducted ethically and safely. Potential



risks are thoroughly evaluated before the trial begins, and participants are closely monitored throughout the study. Any adverse effects are reported and managed promptly. Participants are also provided with comprehensive information about the potential risks and benefits before they consent to participate.

What would you say to someone who is considering joining a clinical trial?

I would encourage them to discuss this with their healthcare provider and the research team. Understanding the trial's purpose, procedures, and potential benefits and risks can help them to make an informed decision. Participation in clinical trials is voluntary, and participants can withdraw at any time. It offers an opportunity to contribute to medical research and potentially benefit from cutting-edge treatments.

How does The Skin Hospital discuss and promote clinical trial opportunities?

We inform patients about the clinical trials available. We discuss potential trials during consultations to ensure that patients are aware of the latest research and treatments. We also provide promotional materials and hold informational sessions to explain the process of participating in a clinical trial.

Our goal is to empower patients by giving them the information to make the right decision for them. This could lead to improving treatments for themselves and others in the future. The Clinical Trials Team at The Skin Hospital is highly experienced, and the trials take place at our state-of-the-art facilities.



A focus on PSORIASIS

Currently, The Skin Hospital is recruiting for two clinical trials on psoriasis. Dr Cindy Kok, Head of Research & Clinical Trials at The Skin Hospital, explains more about this skin condition.

What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is an immune-mediated disease, which means it is caused by a dysfunction in the immune system leading to inflammation in the body. This condition speeds up the life cycle of skin cells, causing them to build up rapidly on the surface of the skin. The result is raised plaques and scales that can itch, burn, and sting.

These plaques are commonly found on the elbows, knees, and scalp, but they can appear anywhere on the body. Psoriasis can also lead to other health issues, including psoriatic arthritis, which causes pain, swelling, and stiffness in the joints.

How do clinical trials specifically benefit patients with psoriasis?

Patients with psoriasis who participate in clinical trials often gain access to the latest treatments before they are widely available. This can be beneficial for those who have not responded well to existing therapies. Participants receive

close monitoring and care from the clinical trials staff, which can lead to better management of their condition. Importantly, by participating in clinical trials, patients contribute to advancing medical research, which can lead to improved treatments for future patients.

What are some of the current clinical trials in psoriasis that you find particularly promising?

There are several exciting clinical trials underway. Some are exploring new biologic therapies that target specific pathways in the immune system to reduce inflammation. Others are investigating small molecule drugs that can be taken orally and offer convenience for patients.

Additionally, there are trials focused on understanding the genetic factors of psoriasis, which could lead to more personalised and effective treatments. Each of these studies hold the potential to significantly advance our understanding and treatment of psoriasis. Clinical trials are the cornerstone of medical advancements. They provide the evidence we need to improve existing treatments and develop new ones.

New clinical trials at The Skin Hospital

Vitiligo Study

A vitiligo study for adults and adolescents is exploring if experimental tablets are an effective treatment for vitiligo spots. This trial is enrolling participants who have had nonsegmental vitiligo for at least three months, who have active or stable vitiligo, with spots on the face and body.

Plaque Psoriasis Study

A plaque psoriasis study for adolescents is exploring if experimental tablets are an effective treatment for plaque psoriasis. We are seeking adolescent participants who have been diagnosed with moderate to severe

plaque psoriasis and are able to attend our Sydney clinic.

The Skin Hospital is seeking participants for a range of clinical conditions across a wide variety of skin conditions that will take place at our state-of-the-art facility in Darlinghurst. To see a full list of The Skin Hospital's current clinical trials, visit our website - <https://skinhospital.edu.au/clinical-trials/>

If you would like to be considered for a trial or would like to register an expression of interest for a future clinical trial, please complete your details - <https://skinhospital.edu.au/register-clinical-trial/>.



**GET
INVOLVED**

If you are interested in learning more about our research initiatives or participating in our clinical trials, please contact **Dr. Cindy Kok** at **02 8651 2027** or ckok@skinhospital.edu.au. Your involvement and support are instrumental in furthering our mission to advance dermatological knowledge and improve patient care.

Recent Research Studies

Throughout the past year, our research department has been actively engaged in several studies aimed at improving our understanding and treatment of various dermatological conditions. Two notable examples include:

- Redeveloping non-cultured epidermal cellular grafting for the surgical treatment of vitiligo in the Australian setting.
- Investigation of a potential link between Covid-19 disease, vaccinations, and disease progression in patients with vitiligo.

Research Projects in Progress

In addition to clinical trials, our research projects cover a diverse range of topics aimed at improving patient care and outcomes. Projects include:

- Assessing a nurse-led home-based phototherapy program for vitiligo patients.
- Analysing outcomes from the Australian clinical quality registry for Mohs Micrographic Procedures.
- Examining factors associated with patient-initiated communication after Mohs Procedures.

Dermatology Bio Bank Certification

We are happy to announce that our Dermatology Bio-Specimen Bank has received re-certification under the NSW Health Biobank program. This certification underscores our commitment to enhancing statewide consistency, compliance with regulations, and the overall quality of biobanking in NSW. The Bio Bank will play a pivotal role in advancing our understanding of dermatological diseases and skin cancers at a biological level, ultimately leading to improved treatments.

Donate to Help Support Research into Skin Cancer & Skin Disease

Your donations play a crucial role in The Skin Hospital's ability to fund new technology and research projects and are invaluable to the wellbeing of our patients.

See our article above which details the world-class research that we are currently undertaking. Your past support has enabled us to be at the forefront of research into the diagnosis and

treatment of skin cancer, as well as provide outstanding training programs for future dermatologists. Thank you.

If you are in a position to donate, we would appreciate your help in enabling us to continue this vital work in training and research.

Donate at
skinhospital.edu.au/donate

As a **Not-For-Profit Foundation**, we are committed to developing potential treatments and furthering Dermatology Clinical Trials & Research.

We are proud to have Associate Professor John Frew leading the team at **The Skin Hospital's Research Facility**.

MAKE A BOOKING

If you would like to **book an appointment** with one of our dermatologists at The Skin Hospital, speak to your GP to get a referral.

If you would like to **refer a patient** to us, please visit our website or call us. See our contact details below.



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To stay up to date with The Skin Hospital's latest news, events and important announcements, we invite you to follow our social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn and YouTube.

Remember to follow us!

