How to Make Cancer Clinical Trials Easier to Join

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For clinical trials to determine whether drugs and medical procedures are safe and effective for all potential users, regardless of age, race and ethnicity, the trials must include a diverse cross-section of participants. But joining a clinical trial often requires traveling and taking time off for in-person appointments, which poses a challenge for many folks. Luckily, remote technologies, such as virtual meetings, may increase enrollment. A recent survey of nearly 1,200 cancer patients and survivors found that 80% were willing to use remote technologies to enroll in clinical trials. In fact, those who said they wouldn't attend in-person appointments claimed they'd be more likely to participate if they could do so remotely. "Expanding who is able to enroll in trials through these tools could have a significant positive impact on the number and diversity of patients enrolled in trials," said Devon Adams, a senior analyst and emerging science expert at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, which conducted the survey. What's more, he added, "the [COVID-19] pandemic necessitated mass adoption of remote technologies, and patients' positive experiences with those tools is increasingly reflected in their willingness to use technology in trials."

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