

I have been involved in clinical research trials for three years now. I began my experiences while I was in a residential eating disorder treatment center. While initially I got involved as an opportunity to leave the treatment center for a day, they have become a much more meaningful aspect of my daily life.

Like I said, I have been a part of a couple of trials, but I will focus on my current study, as that is the most applicable to you. It really scares me that my bones aren't as strong as they could be. I used to play multiple contact sports, but I am too afraid to now, in fear of breaking a bone. I like to think that the efforts of this research team and my support in the cause will lead to a place where others like me no longer have to worry about this.

As a trial participant, there is very little that needs to be done on our side. We have the easy side of things. It may seem all consuming at the start of the trial with all of the appointments, and giving yourself injections, but it becomes routine very quickly. I give myself shots in the same manner as I brush my teeth. I wake up, get dressed, make my lunch for the day, pull out a syringe so I don't forget it and give myself a shot before I go to blow dry my hair in the bathroom. It all works out very nicely. I was never afraid of needles, so this didn't scare me at the beginning, but I understand why others might be put off by this. Keep in mind that they are tiny needles. The patches and vitamins as well just become a part of your routine. In the beginning it is a little difficult to establish this part of your morning and evening patterns, but you just work it in.

The appointments can be made to work into your schedule. I work a regular 9-5 job, which is probably the hardest to work around. Even so, they still make it work for me. The appointments are quick, and I almost enjoy going in for them now, seeing the research team, and you develop a relationship with them.

Additionally, as a recent graduate, the extra income each month is very nice. While this is not a motivating factor into my contributions, I cannot say it deters me.

There is no better feeling than when you know you are contributing to something greater than yourself, and this is a fairly simple way of doing this. I am giving back to the greater eating disorder community, and I am optimistic that my contributions to this study will alleviate some of the pain and struggles future sufferers will have.