

The ethics and politics of human experimentation

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The subjects should participate voluntarily after being fully aware of all benefits and possible harm of the research to them. They should agree on what and what should not happen to them.

Research should as much as possible avoid any harm on the subjects while maximizing its benefits and minimizing any possible harms. A risk/benefit assessment should be carried out before the experiment can be conducted. Benefits may have to be foregone due to possible harms. Subjects should not be harmed no matter the benefits it may bring to others, for example, in the treatment of childhood disease where the subjects may not benefit directly from the research (McNeill, 1993).

Justice should be accorded to the participants. Participation should be allowed for anyone who can benefit from the research and they should not be denied the benefits. Benefits should be distributed fairly according to individual contribution, merit, and role during the research. People should not be selected due to their compromised, availability and manipulated situations example prisoners, ethnic minorities, or patients. If public funds are involved, the benefits should go to all people and not only to those who can afford them (McNeill, 1993).