

Preface

The intention of this book is to highlight the many pitfalls that can occur when contemplating doing clinical research. This is based on my over 45 years of involvement in clinical research in four continents. Even though some of my mishaps have occurred over 40 years ago, I can assure you that these mistakes occur even to this day with monotonous regularity. Hence the book.

After each case history a question is posed. These are questions you may be faced with as a clinical researcher. The solutions suggested may be controversial and as such may form the basis for discussions on how best to proceed in your special circumstance.

The object of these many stories is to alert the clinical researcher and especially the El Toro researcher that there are many potential disasters waiting to happen when you embark on clinical research. But most of all the reader will hopefully understand that meticulous planning is essential for being successful in this field.

Always remember that the object is to achieve one's research goals quickly with a minimal risk of wasting time and resources.

To quote Marks (1) and to paraphrase Hippocrates of Kos (2):

- (1. "The success of research project depends on how well thought out a project is and how potential problems have been identified and resolved before data collection begins" (Marks RG. Designing a research project. The basics of biomedical research methodology. Belmont: Lifetime Learning Publications: A division of Wadsworth 1982).
2. The Art is long
Life is short
Experiments perilous
Decisions difficult.)

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