Blinding in Clinical Trials

Blinding of the trial

- Blinding is a procedure in which one or more parties in a trial are **kept unaware of which treatment arms** participants have been assigned to, i.e. which treatment was received in order to avoid bias.
- Blinding is an important aspect of any trial. **Trials with no blinding are called open trials.**
- If blinding is broken during a trial on individual patients, it needs to be statistically and/or ethically explained at the end

Why do we blind?

- Blinding is used to prevent conscious or unconscious **bias** in the design of a clinical trial.
- This is important because **bias can affect efficacy, care, attitudes, assessments and recruitments or selection of volunteers**
- It ensures the objectivity of trial results

What are the potential sources of bias in a trial?

Sources of bias include:

- Patients being treated
- Clinical staff administering treatment
- Doctor assessing treatment
- Team interpreting trial results

Who can be blinded in clinical trials?

- Participants in a trial
- Clinicians and data collectors
- Outcome adjudicators and data analysts

Types of Blinding

- Single Blinding
- Double Blinding
- Triple blinding

Types of Blinding

Type	Description
Unblinded or open blinding	All are aware of the treatment the participant receives
Single blind or single-masked	Only the participant is unaware of the treatment they receive
Double blind or double-masked	The participant and the clinicians / data collectors are unaware of the treatment the participant receives
Triple blind	Participant, clinicians / data collectors and outcome adjudicators / data analysts are all unaware of the treatment the participant receives.