HIT-CF program – Frequently Asked Questions

My biopsy was taken for further culturing into an organoid…

- ***… Does this automatically mean that I am selected for a clinical trial?***
  No. Only 78 out of the 502 people with CF whom a biopsy was taken from for the HIT-CF program will be selected to participate in the clinical trials. There will be two clinical trials, one for each pharmaceutical company participating in HIT-CF (Eloxx Pharmaceuticals and Proteostasis Therapeutics).

- ***… Will I be personally notified whether or not I am selected for a clinical trial? Who will notify me?***
  Yes, you will be notified by your treating physician.

- ***… When will the clinical trials start?***
  The HIT-CF team is currently working on preparing the clinical trials. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, there has been a delay in culturing the biopsies collected from all the patients and with testing the drug compounds on the organoids in the lab. Therefore, clinical trials will not start in autumn 2020 as was communicated earlier but rather in winter 2020-2021.

I am selected to participate in a clinical trial…

- ***… Does this automatically mean that my organoid responded well to one of the tested compounds?***
  No. For both clinical trials, a total of 26 people whose organoid showed a high response will be enrolled. For the Proteostasis trial, an additional group of 26 people will be included to cover a range of organoid responses including a minimum of 5 people with a low organoid response. The clinical trial is designed this way in order to compare the clinical outcomes of patients whose organoid responded differently. So, if you are selected for a clinical trial, there is a good chance this means your organoid showed a good response to the drug, but it is not guaranteed.

- ***… How long will each trial take and how many study visits does it entail?***
  It depends on the trial you have been selected for. Both trials will consist in a 8-week cross over design. This means you will receive the active compound for 8 weeks and a placebo for 8 weeks. Between these two phases, there will be an 8-week wash-out period during which you will not receive any treatments. The order of treatment (i.e. active drug or placebo) will be randomly assigned. For the Proteostasis trial (CHOICES study) the last treatment will be followed by a 16-week treatment (either active drug or placebo) to assess the durability of the effect of the drug. For the Eloxx trial, this has not yet been decided.

After the clinical trial has ended…

- ***… Will I have access to the tested compound?***
  If you have been selected for the Proteostasis trial, you will have the possibility to continue with the tested drug by enrolling for an open label extension study (CHOICES study). The Eloxx trial is still under discussion but they are willing to continue with a phase 3 study.

- ***… Will I receive more information about the tested compound?***
  You will know for which drug you have been selected as the compounds will be tested in 2 separate clinical trials.

I am not selected to participate in a clinical trial...

- ***… Does this automatically mean that my organoid did not show a good response to any of the tested compounds?***
  Not necessarily. It could be that many people responded to the drug. Because only 26 responders will be enrolled in each clinical trial, it may be that, although your organoid showed a good response to the drug, the response of others were even higher.

- ***…. Will I receive more information about which study drugs were tested on my organoid in the lab and how it responded?***
  We will send you feedback on the organoid testing results. However, many of the drugs tested here are not yet available for clinical use. Therefore, depending on their development status, we will not always be able to share with you the details of your organoid response per drug. Please also bear in mind that you will receive this information only after the clinical trials have been completed.

- ***…. Are there other studies similar to the HIT-CF programme planned in the future?***
  In the framework of this project, we are discussing with the European Medicines Agency to obtain that the organoid model is recognised as a validated method to test new drug compounds in the future. This is important because it will allow to test compounds on patients that cannot take part in large trials due to their rare genetic profile. This should pave the way for more trials with new drugs for people with rare mutations, so yes, it is our hope that more trials like this will emerge in the future.