

# Isn't it all just research?



**The National Institutes of Health is the largest biomedical research agency in the world**, which means it conducts and supports a lot of different types of research. Understanding the differences between research types is important to appreciating the role of the NIH in enhancing the health of our nation and world.

## HERE ARE SOME “RESEARCH” TERMS AND WHAT THEY MEAN



### Intramural Research

Intramural research is conducted by scientists employed by NIH.

Approximately 1,200 principal investigators and more than 4,000 postdoctoral fellows conduct basic, translational and clinical research as part of the NIH **Intramural Research Program**.



### Extramural Research

Extramural research is done by scientists outside of the NIH who have been awarded NIH research grants. **Most of the research supported by the NIH is extramural.**

In **FY2021**, \$35.73 billion was awarded in extramural grants to researchers in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

### Basic Research

*(aka Foundational Research, Basic Science)*

Basic research is the foundation of medical discovery. Through it we gain greater understanding of living systems and life processes, leading to better ways to predict, prevent, diagnose and treat disease. Just over half of NIH's budget goes toward **basic science**.

### Clinical Research

Clinical research refers to studies conducted in collaboration with human beings, undertaken to improve human health. It includes clinical trials. The NIH **Clinical Center** is the world's largest hospital entirely devoted to clinical research.

### Applied Research

Applied research is designed to solve specific practical problems or answer certain questions. It involves applying existing knowledge, much of which is obtained through basic research, to a specific biomedical problem. Just under half of NIH's budget goes toward **applied research**.

### Translational Research

Translational research is the process of applying ideas and discoveries generated through basic scientific inquiry to the treatment or prevention of human disease — taking research from the 'bench to the bedside.' **The National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS)** at NIH focuses on how to get more treatments to more patients more quickly.