Incidental Findings

January 2017

Background:

Incidental findings are undiagnosed medical or psychiatric conditions that are discovered unintentionally during the course of study participation. The incidental finding is unrelated to the current medical or psychiatric condition which is being treated or for which tests were being performed.

Q: Is there something I should put in the consent about the potential of discovering an incidental finding?

Yes, the IRB has standardized text that can be inserted in the section that describes what is being done as part of this research: “Tests done only for research purposes will not be evaluated or used to diagnose or treat any of your medical problems. This/these test(s) may need to be repeated if required for your medical care in the future”.

Q: What should I do if there is an incidental finding on one of my participants?

If an incidental finding is discovered, the participant should be referred to their primary medical doctor to be evaluated.