# Wash-Out (HRPP 3.13)

## Description:

This policy describes UNMC's requirements for IRB review and approval of clinical trials that utilize wash-out effective therapy.

## Definitions:

***Randomization:*** the assignment of subjects to different treatments, interventions, or conditions based on chance, rather than by design of selection.

***Wash-Out Period:*** a protocol-mandated interval during which a participant must discontinue current or prior treatment before initiating an investigational therapy or being randomized to either a placebo or active treatment arm.

## Use of a Wash-Out:

Use of a wash-out period involving withdrawal of effective therapy may be ethically justified only when:

- There are scientifically sound reasons for requiring a wash-out; and
- The wash-out does not expose subjects to additional risks or serious or irreversible harm, either:
  - During the wash-out period itself, or
  - During the trial, if the subject is subsequently assigned to a placebo arm

## Study Design Considerations:

### Risk Minimization Requirements:

- The risk associated with wash-out of effective therapy is minimized. Acceptable procedures to reduce risk may include, but are not limited to:

    - Frequent and careful monitoring for worsening of the subject's underlying condition
    - Early withdrawal criteria for subjects who exhibit clinical deterioration or insufficient improvement
    - Prompt intervention or treatment, including re-initiation of effective therapy, if clinically indicated
    - Exclusion criteria for participants who are at increased risk of harm from wash-out
    - Cross-over design, allowing all participants to eventually receive the investigational intervention
    - Oversight by an independent Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) to ensure ongoing safety and ethical integrity
- The investigational intervention must offer the potential for at least equivalent direct benefit to the participant compared to the current standard of care

### Informed Consent Requirements:

For **clinical trials using a wash-out period**, the informed consent process and document must include:

- A **clear statement that the research involves a wash-out period** during which the subject will be taken off a therapy that has been effective
- An explanation of the **scientific rationale** for the wash-out period, written in lay language understandable to a non-medical audience
- A **description of the risks** associated with the wash-out period, including the potential for worsening of the subject's disease or condition due to the discontinuation of effective therapy
- The **plan for early termination** of the wash-out period and resumption of effective therapy if the subject's clinical status worsens or fails to meet predefined safety criteria