

Basics For Evaluating Medical Research Studies: A Simplified Approach: And Why Your Patients Need You To Know This (Delfini Group Evidence-Based Practice Series Short How-to Guide Book)

By Delfini Group, Sheri Ann Strite, Michael E. Stuart MD

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"Best help with evidence-based medicine available." Marty Gabica MD, Chief Medical Officer, Healthwise

"I am full of admiration for this terrific little book...which is written clearly, simply and appropriately for a starter audience. Those with more experience...can benefit too. I know of no other book that has succeeded so well in getting everything important covered so succinctly, which the authors have done brilliantly well!" Richard Lehman, MA, BM, BCh, Oxford, & Blogger, BMJ Journal Watch

The shocking truth is that most scientific research that informs most doctors' medical decisions is unreliable or is of uncertain reliability. And many doctors and other health care professionals do not realize this. Every day patients are harmed by unfortunate health care choices—and some of them die because of it. Too often this happens because of problems with the information provided to the patient—or its lack—where different information could have resulted in a very different choice—and a very different outcome.

The good news is that you only need to know a few, easy-to-understand statistics, and you need a few basic concepts to help you understand bias and chance.

Medical evidologists and clinical improvement experts, Sheri Ann Strite and Michael E. Stuart MD, provide you with easy-to-understand guidance.

In a few hours, you can learn basic critical appraisal skills to help you evaluate

clinical trials and other medical research studies of therapeutic interventions.

Based on their popular simplified and tool-based approach, the authors show you how to evaluate the reliability and clinical usefulness of clinical trials. Written for physicians and other health care professionals, this book is written in easy-to-understand terms that even the layperson can understand and put to use.

What is Unique About This Book

Practical—information can be applied instantly Concise—can be read in a few hours

Clear—key concepts are explained in easy-to-understand language

Complete enough—We give you the basics you need to evaluate most clinical trials of therapies. We don't bog you down with details you do not need to know. With rare exception, or unless you are a researcher, you don't need to know such concepts as the different observational study types, you don't need to understand power calculations, and you only need a few, easy-to-understand statistics—we give you simple explanations that you can even use in explaining results to patients.

You will learn that the primary key to understanding the reliability of studies is largely about study design, execution and study performance outcomes. You will learn—

—Experiments versus Observations: The quick and easy way to distinguish between experiments and observations—and why you need to know the difference.

—Assessing Selection Bias: 5 Essential Questions Important considerations include who was studied, how were they selected for study, are there enough people, how were they assigned to their study groups, and are the groups balanced?

—Assessing Performance Bias: 2 Essential Questions What is being studied, and what is it being compared to? What else happened to study subjects in the course of the study?

—Assessing Measurement & Attrition Bias: 2 Essential Questions What information was collected, and how was it collected? What data are missing, and does missing data meaningfully distort the study results?

—Assessing Assessment Bias: 2 Essential Questions How is the difference in outcomes between the groups evaluated? What are those differences and how are they expressed?

—Understanding Chance

—Easy Ways to Evaluate Results

—Safety

—Evaluating Authors' Conclusions

This book will help your patients better avoid what has happened to millions of patients—insufficient or misleading information leading to unfortunate choices that resulted in bad outcomes.

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