

Worksheet for Using an Article About Causation of Harm

University of Alberta EBM Toolkit

CITATION:

ARE THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY VALID?

1. Were there clearly identified comparison groups that were similar with respect to important determinants of outcome, other than the one of interest?

Yes No Can't Tell

- RCT, cohort, base-control?
- Other known prognosis factors similar or adjusted for?

2. Were the outcomes and exposures measured in the same way in the groups being compared?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Recall bias? Interviewer bias?
- Exposure opportunity similar?

3. Was follow-up sufficiently long and complete?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Reasons for incomplete follow-up?
- Risk factors similar in those lost and not lost to follow-up?

4. Is the temporal relationship correct?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Exposure preceded outcome?

5. Is there a dose-response gradient?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Risk of outcome increases with quantity or duration of exposure?

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

1. How strong is the association between exposure and outcome?

Yes No Can't Tell

- RR's or OR's?

2. How precise is the estimate of risk?

- Confidence intervals?

WILL THE RESULTS HELP ME IN CARING FOR MY PATIENTS?

1. Are the results applicable to my practice?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Patients similar for demographics, morbidity and other prognostic factors?
- Are treatments and exposures similar?

2. What is the magnitude of the risk?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Absolute risk increase (and its reciprocal)?

3. Should I attempt to stop the exposure?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Strength of evidence?
- Magnitude of risk?
- Adverse effects of reducing exposure?