

Worksheet for Using a Systematic Review About Therapy

University of Alberta EBM Toolkit

CITATION:

ARE THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY VALID?*

* Note that these validity criteria can be applied to systematic reviews in any domain (Therapy, Diagnosis, Harm, Prognosis)

1. Did the overview address a focused clinical question?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Patients? Exposures? Outcomes?
- Therapy? Causation? Diagnosis? Prognosis?

2. Were the criteria used to select articles for inclusion appropriate?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Patients? Exposures? Outcomes? Methodological standards?

3. Is it unlikely that important, relevant studies were missed?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Bibliographic databases?
- Reference lists?
- Personal contacts?

4. Was the validity of the included studies appraised?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Validity criteria?

5. Were assessments of studies reproducible?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Blinded reviewers?
- Inter-observer agreement?

6. Were the results similar from study to study?

- Tests of homogeneity?

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?*

***Note that these questions apply ONLY to systematic reviews of therapy**

1. What are the overall results of the review?

- Overall ORs, RRs?
- Weighing of studies?

2. How precise were the results?

- Confidence intervals?

WILL THE RESULTS HELP ME IN CARING FOR MY PATIENTS?*

***Note that these questions apply ONLY to systematic reviews of therapy**

1. Can the results be applied to my patient care?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Patients similar for demographics, severity, co-morbidity and other prognostic factors?

- Compelling reason why the results should not be applied?

2. Were all clinically important outcomes considered?

Yes No Can't Tell

- Are substitute endpoints valid?

3. Are the likely treatment benefits worth the potential harms and costs?

Yes No Can't Tell

- NNT for different outcomes?