

Critical appraisal of papers

Checklist

1. Purpose and importance of the study
 - a. Why was the study done?
 - b. What were the primary hypotheses and were they clearly stated?
 - c. Whom is the study about?
 - d. Is the topic area relevant?
 - e. Was the study original?
2. Study design
 - a. What type of study was done?
 - b. Was this design the appropriate way to test the research hypothesis? Would another design be more appropriate?
 - c. How was the size of the study population determined? Would another size be more appropriate?
 - d. Was assessment 'blind'?
 - e. Was systematic bias avoided or minimised?
How likely is selection / information bias?
3. Analysis of the data
 - a. How was the association between exposition and outcome described? Was this adequate?
 - b. How was chance accounted for in the association between exposition and outcome?
 - c. What was done to correct for confounding? Was this adequate?
4. Interpretation of results
 - a. Were study's conclusions supported by the data?
 - b. How could bias have influenced the results of the study?
 - c. For whom could the results be generalised?
 - d. Is the interpretation of the data conservative?
 - e. (see also Bradford Hill's criteria of proved causation)