

## Comparison of Analytical Strategies

Attribute	Type of analytical strategy		
	Case-control	Cohort	Cross-sectional
Classification of population	Cases with condition (disease) with or with- out the characteristic, and controls	Population free from condition or disease, with or without characteristic	Populations without identification of condition or characteristic
Sample represented	Uncertain: the source population of the cases is unknown	Non-diseased	Survivors at a point or period in time
Temporal sequence	Retrospective	Prospective or retrospective	Contemporary or retrospective
Function	Compares prevalence of exposure among cases and controls	Compares incidence rates in exposed and unexposed	Describes association between exposure and disease simultaneously
Outcome	Prevalence of exposure in cases and controls	Incidence of disease in exposed and unexposed	Prevalence of disease in exposed and unexposed
Risk measure	Odds ratio (estimate of relative risk)	Relative risk, attributable risk	Prevalence ratio (inexact estimate of relative risk); also odds ratio
Evidence of causality	Needs more careful analysis	Strong	Only suggestive
Bias	Needs more effort and sometimes very difficult to manage	Easy to manage	May be very difficult to manage