

What Is the Level of Evidence for Advertisements in SIU and EAU Journals Published in 2010 and 2011? Preliminary Results

Introduction and Objective: Annually, a large volume of medical advertisements are being published. It has been estimated that in medical journals, advertising is the most beneficial way for providing the fees. Writers have mentioned some probable mistakes in the ads so that the society of physicians might be deceived because of the high reliance on the best-known international journals. The aim of study is to evaluate the validity of advertisements published in SIU & EAU journals in last two years.

Materials and Methods: A descriptive study was carried out since January to March 2012. At first, around 50% of the SIU & EAU journals published in 2010 & 2011 were randomly selected. The advertised drugs were surveyed with a critical point of view. Then with a wide search through the PubMed the best available evidences about each advertisement were selected. Then the methodology of the Randomized Controlled Trials (if any) was assessed. The RCTs were appraised by the means of CASP checklist (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme). They were classified as mild, moderate and high level of evidences. At last the sponsors of these researches were considered in this study.

Results: The RCT-supported drugs were classified according to their CASP checklist scores; some of the achieved results according to CASP illustrated that in 97% of RCT articles, there was a clear question for the study to address in terms of the population, intervention and outcomes. In 58% of articles, participants, staff and study personnel were blind to study group. Unfortunately the majority of the studies were supported by related companies. Despite the general expectation of the medical society, a considerable rate of 23 percent of advertised drugs were not supported by any RCTs. The level of the evidence in detail was illustrated in a separate table.

Conclusion: In a brief view, despite physicians' expectations, the validity of advertisements shouldn't be considered according to the fame of journals. In such authentic journals like SIU and EAU, the ads should be as valid as their international fame.