2. Background/rationale: Explain the scientific background and rationale for the investigation being reported.

**Example**

“Concerns about the rising prevalence of obesity in children and adolescents have focused on the well documented associations between childhood obesity and increased cardiovascular risk and mortality in adulthood. Childhood obesity has considerable social and psychological consequences within childhood and adolescence, yet little is known about social, socioeconomic, and psychological consequences in adult life. A recent systematic review found no longitudinal studies on the outcomes of childhood obesity other than physical health outcomes and only 2 longitudinal studies of the socioeconomic effects of obesity in adolescence. Gortmaker et al found that US women who had been obese in late adolescence in 1981 were less likely to be married and had lower incomes seven years later than women who had not been overweight, while men who had been overweight were less likely to be married. Sargent et al found that UK women, but not men, who had been obese at 16 years in 1974 earned 7.4% less than their nonobese peers at age 23. (…) We used longitudinal data from the 1970 British birth cohort to examine the adult socioeconomic, educational, social, and psychological outcomes of childhood obesity.”

**Explanation**

The scientific background of the study provides important context for readers. It sets the stage for the study and describes its focus. It gives an overview of what is known on a topic and what gaps in current knowledge are addressed by the study. Background material should note recent pertinent studies and any systematic reviews of pertinent studies.