

A web site for home pregnancy tests cites the following: "When the subjects using the test were women who collected and tested their own samples, the overall sensitivity was 75%. Specificity was also low, in the range 52% to 75%." Assume the lower value for the specificity. Suppose a subject has a positive test and that 30% of women taking pregnancy tests are actually pregnant. What number is closest to the probability of pregnancy given the positive test?

$$\text{Sensitivity} = P(+|D) = 0.75$$

$$\text{Specificity} = P(-|D^c) = 0.52$$

$$\text{Subject} \rightarrow +$$

$$P(D) = 0.3 \quad \text{PREVALENCE}$$

$$P(D|+) = ?$$

USING BAYES' RULE

$$P(D|+) = \frac{P(+|D)P(D)}{P(+|D)P(D) + P(+|D^c)P(D^c)}$$

$$= \frac{P(+|D)P(D)}{P(+|D)P(D) + (1 - P(-|D^c))(1 - P(D))}$$

$$= \frac{0.75(0.3)}{0.75(0.3) + (1 - 0.52)(1 - 0.3)} = \frac{0.225}{0.561}$$

$$P(D|+) = 0.4011$$

$$P(D|+) \approx 40\%$$