



Critical Appraisal of Epidemiological Studies and Clinical Trials (Oxford Medical Publications)

By Mark Elwood

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This book presents a logical system of critical appraisal, to allow readers to evaluate studies and to carry out their own studies more effectively. This system emphasizes the central importance of cause and effect relationships. Its great strength is that it is applicable to a wide range of issues, and both to intervention trials and observational studies.

This system unifies the often different approaches used in epidemiology, health services research, clinical trials, and evidence-based medicine, starting from a logical consideration of cause and effect. The author's approach to the issues of study design, selection of subjects, bias, confounding, and the place of statistical methods has been praised for its clarity and interest. Systematic reviews, meta-analysis, and the applications of this logic to evidence-based medicine, knowledge-based health care, and health practice and policy are discussed. Current and often controversial examples are used, including screening for prostate cancer, publication bias in psychiatry, public health issues in developing countries, and conflicts between observational studies and randomized trials. Statistical issues are explained clearly without complex mathematics, and the most useful methods are summarized in the appendix.

The final chapters give six applications of the critical appraisal of major studies; randomized trials of medical treatment and prevention, a prospective and a retrospective cohort study, a small matched case-control study, and a large case-control study. In these chapters, sections of the original papers are reproduced and the original studies places in context by a summary of current developments.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The premise of the book is laudable in that critical thinking and evaluation of peer-reviewed literature is imperative in the training of public health and clinical researchers. In general, the book lays a foundation, establishes the issues of bias and bias control, and provides a framework for evaluation with examples."--*Doody's*

"*Critical Appraisal of Epidemiological Studies and Clinical Trials*, 3rd Edition clearly and comprehensively explains how to design and evaluate clinical trials and observational studies through the lens of causation..."--*Journal of Clinical Research Best Practices*

About the Author

Mark Elwood is an epidemiologist with particular interests in cancer prevention, screening, and evidence-based medicine. He has worked in three continents and trained in Belfast, in Ottawa and at Harvard. He has recently returned to the British Columbia Cancer Agency, Vancouver, where he was the first Head of Epidemiology. He has been Professor of Epidemiology and Community Medicine at the University of Nottingham, UK and Director of the National Cancer Control Initiative in Australia. His research has focused on the prevention and early diagnosis of cancers and birth defects, the evaluation of clinical and public health interventions, and the evaluation of environmental hazards. Professor Elwood is the author of several books and over 250 scientific papers.

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