

"Principles of Scientific Literature Evaluation: Critiquing Clinical Drug Trials"

Frank J. Ascione, 2001, 198 pages, American Pharmaceutical Association, \$45.00

Review by Norman M. Goldfarb

"Principles of Scientific Literature Evaluation: Critiquing Clinical Drug Trials" proposes a straightforward step-wise approach to reading scientific articles, with each step comprised of series of questions – a total of 23 questions in eight steps. The questions for step two – Methods: Patients and Research Setting – are:

- Are the patients selected and enrolled in the trial appropriately?
- Are the inclusion and exclusion criteria used to select the patients appropriate, clear and complete?
- How closely does the trial sample represent the type of patient who will be treated with the investigational drug?
- How similar are the trial drug therapy and regimen to that used in clinical practice?

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Essential reading for clinical research professionals

If the reader finds adequate answers to these questions, the article will be more credible and useful than if the answers are incomplete, ambiguous or missing.

The book consists of nine chapters:

- Evaluating the Scientific Literature
- Abstract and Introduction
- Methods: Patients and Research Setting
- Methods: Use of Experimental Controls
- Methods: Measurement of Results
- Results: Protocol and Data Management Problems
- Results: Presentation of Data
- Results: Interpretation of Data
- Discussion and Conclusions

The book is available in bookstores.

Reviewer

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