

**CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR AN ARTICLE
ON PROGNOSIS.**

Study Design: Cohort study.

Adapted from:

Laupacis A, Wells G, Richardson WS, Tugwell P. Users' guides to the medical literature. V. How to use an article on prognosis. *JAMA* 1994; 272: 234-237.

DOES THE STUDY ADDRESS A CLEAR QUESTION?

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|---|------------|-------------------|-----------|
| <p>1. Is there a clearly focussed question?</p> <p>Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients • Disease/Condition • Outcome | Yes | Can't tell | No |
|---|------------|-------------------|-----------|

ARE THE RESULTS VALID?

| | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------|-----------|
| <p>2. Was a defined, representative sample of patients assembled at a common (usually early) point in the course of their disease?</p> | Yes | Can't tell | No |
| <p>3. Was the follow-up of these patients sufficiently long and complete?</p> | | | |
| <p>4. Were objective and unbiased outcome criteria used?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the individual assessing the outcome criteria know whether or not the patient had a potential prognostic factor, i.e. were they blinded? | | | |
| <p>5. Was there adjustment for important prognostic factors?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there standardisation for potentially important prognostic factors e.g. age? • Were different sub-groups compared? • Was there validation in an independent group of patients? | | | |

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

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| <p>6. How likely are the outcome event(s) over a specified period of time?</p> | |
| <p>7. How precise are the estimates of this likelihood?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the results presented with confidence intervals? | |

WILL THE RESULTS HELP ME WITH THIS PATIENT?

| <p>8. Were the study patients similar to this patient?</p> | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Can't tell</p> | <p>No</p> |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <p>9. Will the results lead directly to selecting or avoiding a treatment?</p> | | | |
| <p>10. Are the results useful for reassuring or counselling my patient?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the evidence make a clinically important impact on your conclusions about what to offer or tell this patient? | | | |

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|---------------------------|---|
| Prognosis | The possible outcomes of a disease and the frequency with which they can be expected to occur. |
| Prognostic factors | Characteristics of a patient that may be used to more accurately predict the outcome in that patient. These may be demographic (e.g. age), disease-specific (e.g. tumour stage) or co-morbid (e.g. other diseases accompanying the disease in question). Prognostic factors don't have to cause the outcome, just be associated strongly enough to predict their development. |
| Cohort study | Study design in which a group of individuals are followed up prospectively over time to see if they develop a disease or outcome of interest. |