

Book Review

Basic Methods of Medical Research

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The book "Basic Methods of Medical Research" is written in a simple and easy to understand language. It gives all the details about how to write a thesis or research report, beginning from selection of a topic to the presentation of results, more effectively. The book is written in such a lively way that conducting a medical research does not require prior knowledge to understand the matter. The book is a helping and guiding tool to carry out research by the health professionals, especially medical postgraduate students.

The book contains 11 chapters, which are described in a sequence corresponding to the actual steps involved in a medical research. There are chapters on setting up a good study design, deciding an adequate sample size, methods for managing the data, assessing the statistical significance and presentation of the results in a thesis or paper, or at a conference. The importance of deciding the right sample size is discussed very clearly. Almost all the formulae for calculating an effective sample size are described at one place.

The major strength of the book is the detailed discussion on planning and designing that form the backbone of research. The last chapter on presentation of results does not restrict to a thesis or paper but also delves on oral and poster presentation. Valuable tips have been provided for upcoming researchers.

The chapter on evaluating the statistical significance, confidence interval and robustness is written to understand the basics behind the statistical procedures so that they can be confidently applied under different conditions depending on the nature of data. There is no mathematical jargon. For medical professionals it is more important to know, when, where and how these methods can be employed and this has been addressed very adequately. To the best of my knowledge, it is the first book where the author has emphasized more on understanding through text than through numbers, for non-mathematical readers.

The book is nicely formatted. All the key information is provided in the text box with a reference list at the end of the chapter. Real life practical examples are taken and epidemiological concepts in research are fully explained. More examples on health sciences rather than restricting to only medical data would help.

This book is an essential tool for medical postgraduates and health professionals though it lacks explanation on the multivariate methods,

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