How To Read A Paper: The Basics Of Evidence-Based Medicine (HOW - How To)

Synopsis

The best-selling introduction to evidence-based medicineIn a clear and engaging style, How to Read a Paper demystifies evidence-based medicine and explains how to critically appraise published research and also put the findings into practice.An ideal introduction to evidence-based medicine, How to Read a Paper explains what to look for in different types of papers and how best to evaluate the literature and then implement the findings in an evidence-based, patient-centred way. Helpful checklist summaries of the key points in each chapter provide a useful framework for applying the principles of evidence-based medicine in everyday practice.This fifth edition has been fully updated with new examples and references to reflect recent developments and current practice. It also includes two new chapters on applying evidence-based medicine with patients and on the common criticisms of evidence-based medicine and responses.How to Read a Paper is a standard text for medical and nursing schools as well as a friendly guide for everyone wanting to teach or learn the basics of evidence-based medicine.

Book Information

Series: HOW - How To

Paperback: 284 pages

Publisher: BMJ Books; 5 edition (April 7, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1118800966

ISBN-13: 978-1118800966

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars See all reviews (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #29,122 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)   #30 in Books > Medical Books > Research   #33 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Research   #49 in Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Diagnosis

Customer Reviews

Medical books fall into two main types. Firstly we have our large descriptive textbooks which give us words and pictures to describe what is happening in our patients. Books such as Davidson's, Harrison's and Kumar and Clarke exemplify this tradition. They paint a picture of the practice of medicine.The second type of book forces us to ask sharp questions about the pictures we have about our medicine. They make us question our epistemology. They ask us "how do you know that

is so?" and "How would you know if that wasn't like that?" They ask us to think not, "what do I know?" but "How do I know that I know that?" They make us think about our thinking. They feed an endless line of doubt and dissatisfaction- that ultimately questions existing descriptions of how things are- and leads onto new and innovative ways of conceiving and treating problems. This book is firmly in this second category.Books in this second category suffer in that they are rarely compulsory texts, or fully examined. Medical students and candidates for post-graduate exams are largely questioned on the existing knowledge- as described in the large standard textbooks. They are rarely pushed much into examination of their thinking- the basic descriptions are mostly taken as enough. My profession suffers because it often relies so much on description, rather than primary thinking and analysis of concepts.When you really get interested in medicine then the books in this second category become much more interesting and challenging. Yes you have to know the standard textbooks reasonably well, but the fun in medicine comes from the second category books- those that make us think about our thinking.This current book is excellent. This new edition lives up to the standards of it preceding editions (the very fact an academic book has gone into so many editions is testament that many have found it useful.) The book does it exactly what it says it will do- by the end of it you will know how to read a paper. You will also know how to write a paper better too- you will know what people are looking for in a paper- and so what to provide to editors, reviewers and readers. The book is a clear guide to understanding what a paper is trying to tell you and how to know if it is doing so accurately, fairly, and within the limits of its measurements. The narrative is clear and well structured- and at the end of the book are all the key checklists you will need if you are reading a paper. At any stage of your medical career- from just starting reading papers to people who are already experienced academics and peer reviewers- this book will help sharpen your understanding of medical papers.The book goes some way beyond its title. It moves onto questions about how to use the medical evidence base well in care of an individual patient. It deals well with criticisms of evidence based practice. It helps readers evaluate reviews and meta-analyses well. It deals well with how guidelines are constructed.There is a huge amount in this book. It's a rich book about medicine, and more specifically how we can really claim that we know something in medicine, and how we can then use that knowledge well for patients. It goes far beyond just "reading a paper." It is well constructed, and will give doctors at all stages of their career something to think about- whether for the first time- or as revision and reminder. There's something about basic ideas that makes them worth revisiting regularly. They may be basic, but they are very dangerous if they go without being said.I can recommend this book to all medical students and doctors- it covers basic skills that we all need to understand our medical knowledge and how it is

constructed. At different stages of your career you will take different learning points from it. But at each reading you will learn or remind yourself of something worthwhile from it.

I have used this book and its previous editions as a textbook for a course in the complementary medicine field. This course is for students needing a basic understanding of scientific research. I have found it one of the most easily readable and complete guides in the subject. It is very well organized. I especially like the statistics chapter which is also basic but provides a nice groundwork and explanation of the part of research papers that students find most daunting.I highly recommend it for anyone who is interested in reading and understanding published research papers but who does not have a scientific background. Thank you Dr. Greenhalgh for this book and for keeping it up to date.

Lots of good information and a great read for people who need to know how to read research papers correctly. I have issues with the number of parenthesis and the number of sentences contained in a single parenthesis, it makes for very confusing reading. Additionally the book tends to repeat itself frequently, making for long and tedious chapters.

I am disappointed. I am a statistician and non-MD epidemiologist actively engaged in research and the training of clinical and non-clinical users of research. The author of this book, a senior British MD, certainly knows her way around the arena of research publishing. The overall presentation is old-school and bleak, focusing on the myriad of errors and biases that make particular research projects "useless" much more than on the continuing efforts of experts in research design to systematize good practice. In fact, many "biases" in today's research practice are explicit, pragmatic choices whose effects are a matter of measurable degree. Dr. Greenhalgh might seem to agree about the pragmatism, but the part about measurable impact is not on the agenda here at all. Her presentation is about total failures, easily detected via checklists. One recurrent motif is to conflate mistaken design practices (malpractice?) that may have been published in the past but automatically get manuscripts rejected today. Surely the quality of published research has improved over time. Since Madame Curie? Since Jeckyl and Hyde? Galen?My reading of the chapters covering topics about which I am most expert is that the advice on offer is not helpful or up-to-date. On questionnaire-based research, we are told that response rates under 70% are unacceptable-- a binary, blanket treatment of a continuous quality and cost measure. Further, we are instructed that questionnaire items requiring retrospection or honesty from respondents are "invalid"-- again a

binary treatment of a subject that has fostered much innovation. On sample size and power, an initially smart dissection of the issue degenerates into tricky locutions without much helpful elaboration. How many variants of the intervention are to be included? How many subpopulations deserve separate analysis? Is a bigger sample always better? That's what I deal with routinely as a researcher, but I don't see it here.A book like this is very much needed. But the premise of this book is that medical practitioners need a primer, written by a trusted insider, that will make them more informed participants in evidence-based medicine (EBM). All well and good. Such a book cannot, however, turn a practitioner untrained in research into a journal editor-- but it surely feeds that hope in any reader. A much shorter book could have served to make EBM consumers sufficiently wary of the challenges of research. As an educator I cannot conceive how to overcome this book's tone while teaching medical residents, for example, to assess research for their own practice or to participate in research at their institutions.

The quintessential introduction to understanding how clinical trials actually work, and deciphering the meaning and implications of their findings. A must-have.

East to read. With many web resources and tools which are helpful for critically critique research articles.

Great introduction to EBM, useful for beginners. Clear and funny writing.

Extremely helpful and relevant.

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