

Evaluation

Study Design: Diagnostic accuracy studies

Questions to consider:

- Description of study population, setting (e.g. primary care or academic referral center)
- Recruitment of patients (e.g. based on symptoms, clinical suspicion, results of another diagnostic test)
- Definition of reference standard which establishes the diagnosis for which the test is to be used
- Interpreters of diagnostic test unaware of results of reference standard
- Specifies what clinical information was furnished to interpreters of diagnostic test
- Reports how many test results were equivocal or indeterminate
- Spectrum of patients reasonably represents those expected to undergo the test in clinical practice to resolve diagnostic uncertainty (i.e. does not compare diseased patients with clearly healthy subjects)
- When applicable, estimates sensitivity and specificity of test with measures of uncertainty (e.g. 95% confidence intervals)
- Time interval between application of diagnostic test and application of gold standard reference test
- Relevance and application to workers' compensation population
- Sponsorship and funding source stated with competing interests specified

Conclusions: (inadequate, adequate, high-quality)

Are the authors' conclusions convincingly supported by methods and results, or are alternative interpretations of the same data also plausible? What else might the results mean?