Diagnostic Accuracy Studies

Study Questions

- 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.
- Sponsorship and funding source stated with competing interests specified.

Value Issues:

- 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?
- Is the study equal to, or possibly better than the “gold” standard used?
• How invasive is it? Is it less painful? Lower risk? Easier to administer? Less costly?

• Will the study decrease use of a more costly (or otherwise disadvantageous) 2\textsuperscript{nd} Standard?

• Relevance and application to workers' compensation population.

\textbf{Conclusions:} adequate, inadequate, high-quality, not applicable