

Presenting an Article at Journal Club

Example Framework for Systematic Review/Meta-analysis

Background

- Title, journal, date of publication, authors and whether they have any significant affiliations.
- Describe the background and rationale for this systematic review
 - What gap in knowledge does it intend to fill
 - Any pertinent information on the disease state or medication
 - What are the objectives of the systematic review/meta-analysis

Methods

- Design: systematic review +/- meta-analysis
- Eligibility Criteria
 - What types of studies were included/excluded from the review?
 - Inclusion criteria
 - Exclusion criteria
- Information sources, search strategy, study selection
 - Which databases were searched (eg. Pubmed, Medline, EMBASE)?
 - What years did their search include?
 - Did they use a formal search strategy?
 - Process for selecting studies: screening, eligibility, inclusion in systematic review and meta-analysis
- Quality assessment
 - How was the quality of the studies assessed
 - Did they use a validated scale?
- Outcomes
 - Primary outcome(s)
 - Secondary outcomes (s)

- Any safety outcomes
- Any subgroups
- Statistical considerations
 - Was publications bias assessed and how they assessed it
 - How was heterogeneity assessed?

Results

- Number of studies included in the systematic review/meta-analysis
- General characteristics of the studies included (number of patients, medical conditions, interventions)—this is often presented in a table in the systematic review
- Primary outcome
 - This can be done by presenting the results of the Forrest Plot
- Major secondary outcomes and subgroups, if applicable
- Safety outcomes
- Results for heterogeneity and publication bias

Interpretation/Critique

- Use PRISMA checklist to assess the quality of the systematic review
- State your conclusions
- State the clinical significance
 - Would you apply the results of this systematic review to treat your patients?
 - How might this review affect your clinical decision making?