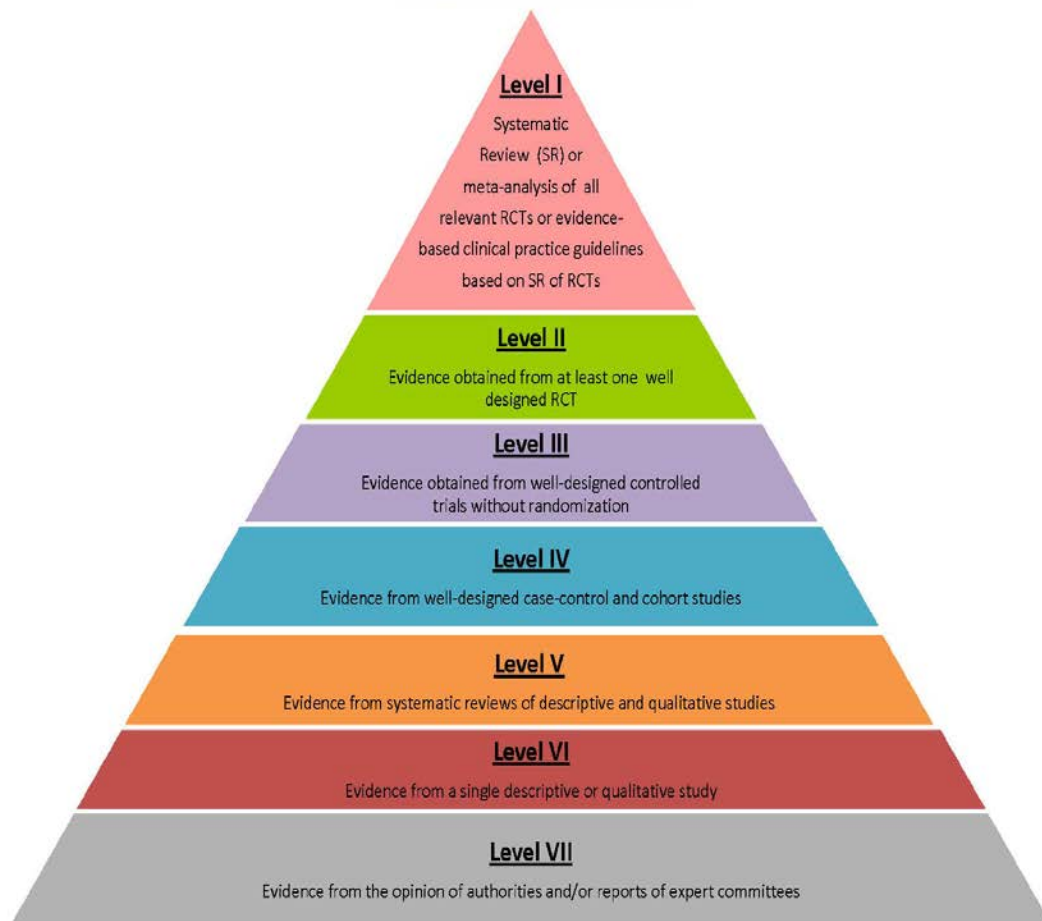


LEVELS OF EVIDENCE



modified from Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt, 2005

Definitions

Systematic Review (SR) Summary of the evidence on a specific clinical topic based on a rigorous process for identifying, appraising, and synthesizing research studies to draw conclusions

Meta-Analysis Summary statistics on the effect of an intervention/treatment across multiple studies

Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) Subjects are randomly assigned to control (placebo or no treatment/intervention) and experimental (treatment or intervention) groups

Evidence-Based Practice Guideline Recommendations for practice from team of experts that is the outcome of an unbiased, exhaustive, and rigorous review of the best evidence on a specific topic

Non-Randomized Controlled Trial Differs from a RCT in that a nonrandom method is used to assign subjects to control and experimental groups, e.g. even/odd numbers, days of the week

Case Control Study Retrospective comparison of a subject with a condition (e.g. hypertension) with one who does not have the condition that is designed to identify variables that might predict the condition (e.g. stressful lifestyle, sodium intake)

Cohort Study Involves two groups of patients (cohorts), one exposed and one not exposed (e.g. to a disease) in which the cohorts are followed prospectively over time to track outcomes

Descriptive Study Research aimed to describe characteristics of certain phenomena or selected variables

Qualitative Study Research that collects data in non-numeric form such as personal interviews