

**CRITICAL APPRAISAL CHECKLIST FOR AN ARTICLE
ON PROGNOSIS.**

Study Design: Cohort study.

Adapted from:

Laupacis A, Wells G, Richardson WS, Tugwell P. Users' guides to the medical literature. V. How to use an article on prognosis. *JAMA* 1994; 272: 234-237.

DOES THE STUDY ADDRESS A CLEAR QUESTION?

<p>1. Is there a clearly focussed question?</p> <p>Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients • Disease/Condition • Outcome 	Yes	Can't tell	No
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ARE THE RESULTS VALID?

<p>2. Was a defined, representative sample of patients assembled at a common (usually early) point in the course of their disease?</p>	Yes	Can't tell	No
<p>3. Was the follow-up of these patients sufficiently long and complete?</p>			
<p>4. Were objective and unbiased outcome criteria used?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the individual assessing the outcome criteria know whether or not the patient had a potential prognostic factor, i.e. were they blinded? 			
<p>5. Was there adjustment for important prognostic factors?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there standardisation for potentially important prognostic factors e.g. age? • Were different sub-groups compared? • Was there validation in an independent group of patients? 			

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

6. How likely are the outcome event(s) over a specified period of time?	
7. How precise are the estimates of this likelihood? Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the results presented with confidence intervals?	

WILL THE RESULTS HELP ME WITH THIS PATIENT?

8. Were the study patients similar to this patient?	Yes	Can't tell	No
9. Will the results lead directly to selecting or avoiding a treatment?			
10. Are the results useful for reassuring or counselling my patient? Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will the evidence make a clinically important impact on your conclusions about what to offer or tell this patient?			

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Prognosis	The possible outcomes of a disease and the frequency with which they can be expected to occur.
Prognostic factors	Characteristics of a patient that may be used to more accurately predict the outcome in that patient. These may be demographic (e.g. age), disease-specific (e.g. tumour stage) or co-morbid (e.g. other diseases accompanying the disease in question). Prognostic factors don't have to cause the outcome, just be associated strongly enough to predict their development.
Cohort study	Study design in which a group of individuals are followed up prospectively over time to see if they develop a disease or outcome of interest.