

GLOSSARY OF EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE AND STATISTICAL TERMS

Term	Abbreviation	Definition
Sensitivity	Sn	Percentage of patients with disease who have a positive test for the disease in question
Specificity	Sp	Percentage of patients without disease who have a negative test for the disease in question
Predictive value (positive and negative)	PV+ PV-	Percentage of patients with a positive or negative test for a disease who do or do not have the disease in question
Pretest probability		Probability of disease before a test is performed
Post-test probability		Probability of disease after a test is performed
Likelihood ratio	LR	LR >1 indicates an increased likelihood of disease, LR <1 indicates a decreased likelihood of disease. The most helpful tests generally have a ratio of less than 0.2 or greater than 5.
Relative risk reduction	RRR	The percentage difference in risk or outcomes between treatment and control groups. Example: if mortality is 30% in controls and 20% with treatment, RRR is $(30 - 20)/30 = 33\%$.
Absolute risk reduction	ARR	The arithmetic difference in risk or outcomes between treatment and control groups. Example: if mortality is 30% in controls and 20% with treatment, ARR is $30 - 20 = 10\%$.
Number needed to treat	NNT	The number of patients who need to receive an intervention instead of the alternative in order for one additional patient to benefit. The NNT is calculated as: $1/ARR$. Example: if the ARR is 4%, the $NNT = 1/4\% = 1/0.04 = 25$.
Number needed to harm	NNH	The number of patients who need to receive an intervention instead of the alternative in order for one additional patient to experience an adverse event.
95% confidence interval	95% CI	An estimate of certainty. It is 95% certain that the true value lies within the given range. A narrow CI is good. A CI that spans 1.0 calls into question the validity of the result.
Systematic review		A type of review article that uses explicit methods to comprehensively analyze and qualitatively synthesize information from multiple studies
Meta-analysis		A type of systematic review that uses rigorous statistical methods to quantitatively synthesize the results of multiple similar studies