

Other topics and Fun Stuff

Notes about learning and teaching about **Other Topics and Fun Stuff**:

1. In addition to the CORE areas, there are many iterations of critical appraisal exercises. In this section, we have given you some examples of common related topics that come up. Specifically, we have given you several examples of the following kinds of topics: Qualitative Research, Prevention and Screening. These might be appropriate topics for more advanced learners or for taking home to try some time in the future. These topics build on the knowledge and skills that are developed in the CORE areas, but are slight deviations from the CORE.
2. Prevention. Prevention is frequently studied in a manner similar to therapy (i.e. with RCT methodology) because it is an intervention (e.g. aspirin to prevent MI). However, one of the main differences pertains to the relative balance of potential benefit to potential harms because prevention deals with individuals who are without the target disorder (primary prevention) or who are trying to prevent recurrence (secondary prevention) whereas a therapy is required to treat a present disorder to prevent related adverse outcomes.
3. Screening. Screening is also frequently studied by RCT because it too is an intervention. In this case, a diagnostic test is used as an intervention to screen for and identify early disease and ultimately to prevent adverse outcomes once the disorder is identified. However, screening can also be studied in terms similar to the study of a diagnostic test, if the question pertains to the ability of the diagnostic test to pick up the target disorder. In this case, then the methodology would more parallel a prospective comparison to a reference standard as in a classic diagnostic test study.
4. Qualitative methods. Qualitative research uses open ended methodology (e.g. focus groups or in depth interviews) to generate hypotheses and expand our thinking in the area of inquiry. Because we are more familiar with quantitative methods, teaching can be both challenging and fun. This section includes an example of several types of teaching exercises to offer some thoughts about how one might teach qualitative methodology.