

Evidenced-Base GI: An Introduction

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Welcome to the first issue of *Evidence-Based GI: An ACG Publication*. Our goal is straightforward: to provide structured abstracts and expert commentary on the best clinical GI, hepatology, and endoscopy research published in the leading general medicine journals as well as European GI journals. We hope to further the educational mission of the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) and help members to deliver compassionate, evidence-based GI patient care of the highest quality.

Even though I diligently review *The American Journal of Gastroenterology*, *Gastroenterology*, *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy*, and *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology* each month, my GI fellows regularly find a way to humble me. It is a little embarrassing to teach that a family history of gastric cancer is an indication to test for *Helicobacter pylori*, only to have a GI fellow teach me about a recent randomized controlled trial in *The New England Journal of Medicine* which found that *H. pylori* treatment significantly reduced the incidence of gastric cancer in those patients.¹ Just another reminder that it's very difficult to stay current with published GI research.

In *Evidence-Based GI*, we'll update you about outstanding clinical GI research published in general medicine journals, such as *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, and *JAMA*, as well as vital work published in the journals of European GI Societies, specifically *GUT*, *Endoscopy*, and the *Journal of Hepatology*. As an ACG publication, we will also

summarize a key study from our flagship Red Journal in each issue. However, our aim is to educate ACG members about the best GI clinical research studies coming from journals that they may not see each month.

Each of our Associate Editors have advanced degrees in clinical epidemiology or public health, and we are advocates of evidence-based medicine (EBM). We will apply EBM methodology to identify well-designed studies which minimize bias in order to produce accurate results. Then, we will explain study results in easy-to-use terms to facilitate the application to patient care. It is important to remember that “EBM” could also be used to describe “experience-based medicine,” and that no single study provides definitive data about how to treat each unique patient. For this reason, each commentary will include a “My Practice” section where the author will discuss how they combine the research data and their own experience when treating individual patients.

I am indebted to several mentors for inspiring this work. R. Brian Haynes, MD, PhD, is Professor (Emeritus) and Past Chair of the Department of Clinical Epidemiology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, and the inaugural Editor of the *ACP Journal Club* publication—now a subsection of *Annals of Internal Medicine*. He invited me to write commentaries for that journal after an EBM seminar in the 1990s which started my academic career. In some ways, this publication is an homage to *ACP Journal Club*, which I see as the gold standard for producing evidence-based summaries of clinical research. Also, Gordon Guyatt, MD, MSc, who coined the phrase “Evidence-Based Medicine,” and Deborah Cook, MD, MSc, are true pioneers of EBM who spent countless hours teaching me EBM concepts. As this publication evolves, I will do my best to apply their lessons and teachings. Finally, Douglas Rex, MD, MACG, and past president of the ACG roused me from my COVID lockdown-induced stupor when he started *ASGE JournalScan*, which reviews endoscopic research. It is a terrific tool for endoscopists to identify studies that they may have missed. Although *Evidence-Based GI* has different aims and objectives, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge how Dr. Rex’s work inspired me to work on this project. Finally, thanks to Deepak Parakkal, MD, FACG, Chair of the ACG

Digital Communications and Publications Committee, and the current ACG President, David Greenwald, MD, FACG, for supporting this project as well as Anne-Louise Oliphant, ACG Vice President of Communications, Claire Neumann, ACG Managing Editor, Kavitha Gnanasekhar, ACG Assistant Managing Editor and Kate Langenberg, ACG Editorial Coordinator for making this project work.

This is a work in progress, and although the format, content, and presentation of the publication may change over time, our mission will remain the same. We are trying different approaches, including audio summaries that accompany each article. Each summary should be easily read in 5 minutes on one's electronic device, and we are experimenting with graphical displays of key study findings. A glossary with definitions of different methodological and statistical terms will be added along with links to EBM guides for evaluating the medical literature. I welcome comments, and thank you for joining us on this journey.

Reference

1. Choi IJ, Kim CG, Lee JY, et al. Family History of Gastric Cancer and Helicobacter Pylori Treatment. *N Engl J Med* 2020; 382: 427-36.