

Guidelines for Interpreting Important Research in Diabetes

Landmark national and international research studies provide the scientific evidence, clinical trials, accepted science, and expert opinion that document the:

- Reduction of diabetes-related complications with improved diabetes management
- Importance of optimal diabetes management
- Importance of individualizing management strategies

It is important to review diabetes research with a critical eye. This can assist with ensuring new information is used to direct and improve diabetes care. Factors to consider when reading research include:

Type of research

From strongest to weakest, look for these types of research:

- Randomized, controlled study
- Clinical trial
- Prospective cohort study
- Meta-analysis that incorporates quality ratings in the analysis
- Case control study
- Observational study
- Case series or case report

Size of the study

Larger studies provide more power and multicenter trials or studies will provide more strength to the conclusions than a single institution study.

Research funding

Research can be funded from a variety of organizations from national organizations such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to studies funded by a commercial entity.

Reference

Nadeau, J. & Camp, S. (2006). *Interpreting Research Studies* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Guttmacher Institute.

Conductor of the research

Evaluate the existence of research participants among industry, institutes, and university-based researchers.

Research publications

Look for studies published in major, peer-reviewed medical journals.

Research participants

In addition to the number of research participants, identify their characteristics about age, gender, overall health status, race, and ethnic-cultural background.

Research replication

Confidence is increased if the research has been repeated with similar findings.

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