

Book Reviews

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Evidence-based dentistry: managing information for better practice (2008)

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The term ‘evidence-based dentistry’ (EBD) was introduced to the dental community in the mid-nineties of the last century. A number of questions are often raised when talking with practitioners about EBD and one of the most common is ‘is it really different from what I do now?’ This concise text (137 pages) aims to provide undergraduates and postgraduates with an introduction to EBD and the possibilities to apply it in practice.

In 13 short chapters, the book follows the usual route for explaining EBD. The hierarchy of evidence is considered in Chapter 2. In the next chapter, eight illustrated patient problems are presented and the reader is challenged to respond to these clinical scenarios and to compare the responses to the evidence presented in the subsequent chapters. In Chapter 4, the so-called PICO (patient, intervention, comparison, and outcome) format for clarifying clinical questions concerning therapy is explained. In this context, evidence-based clinical guidelines are discussed, where to find them and how to decide whether a guideline can be trusted. The following chapters deal with systematic

reviews that summarize the available clinical evidence and systematic reviews by the Cochrane Collaboration, which represent the highest quality available. The reader gets a short introduction of how to undertake a simple search in PubMed, to appraise a review, and to apply the eventual results to the patient. The most appropriate study designs for particular clinical questions are then outlined in the following chapters: discussing (dis)advantages of and key differences between randomized clinical trials, cohort studies, diagnostic studies, and qualitative studies. The last chapters aim to translate this knowledge to clinical practice.

This small booklet provides students and clinicians (dentists as well as specialists) with a basic understanding of EBD. The text is concise and without redundancies. Often flow charts and tables are used to demonstrate the steps that should be followed to undertake a certain task or to appraise a particular research approach. For beginners in the field of EBD, this book is a good starting point.

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