

THE PHARMACIST'S GUIDE TO

Evidence-Based
Medicine
for Clinical
Decision Making

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Preface

E*vidence-based medicine* has been taught in a focused manner at the University of Missouri–Kansas City School of Pharmacy since 1998. Over that time, a unique systematic approach has been developed that caters to the analytical mind of the pharmacy practitioner. This book represents an attempt to transfer this process to pharmacy students and practitioners for maximizing clinical decision making.

Other evidence-based medicine processes have proven to be complex, labor intensive, and time consuming. The *5-Step Evidence-Based Process* described in this book comes out of simplifying the complexity while still maintaining adequate rigor. This allows the practitioner to apply the process to every day, individual patient and population-based, time sensitive decision making.

This is a “how to” book not a text book, although we anticipate the book will be a valuable addition to literature evaluation, evidence-based medicine, and drug information courses. The book was especially developed for the busy practitioner who can read through the text in an evening or two and immediately apply the *5-Step Evidence-Based Medicine Process* to his or her practice setting. Although there is an assumed minimal level of pharmacotherapy, literature evaluation, study design, and interpretive biostatistics knowledge for the reader, reference to additional reading is made to assist those requiring a review of these foundational topics.

The book is arranged in three specific sections that include an introduction and review of basic study interpretation skills, the specific *5-Step Evidence-Based Medicine Process*, and application of this process to specific individual patient and population-based situations. Think of the book as containing core knowledge based on the *5-Step Evidence-Based Medicine Process* (one chapter for each step). In addition, chapters have been added that will provide the required skills, resources, and examples to put this process into practice.

A seasoned practitioner may want to go directly to those chapters describing the *5-Step Evidence-Based Process*, referring to the other chapters as needed. Other readers are encouraged to read the book from cover to cover, keeping in mind that the book was written and formatted with the intention to be an easy read. Throughout the book, “Key Ideas” are extracted and set out from the text. They serve as a quick review as well as reference points to find specific sections of the text to refer back to as the process is applied in clinical practice. In addition, figures and tables have been used extensively to visually convey concepts. Examples have been provided to illustrate application of these concepts. A Glossary of Evidence-Based Medicine terms has been included at the end of the book to help the reader become familiar with the unique vocabulary associated with this discipline. An Evidence-Based Medicine Tool Kit has also been provided to assist with the initial application of this process to clinical practice.

Our goal is to provide this *5-Step Evidence-Based Medicine Process* to every pharmacy practitioner and student so they can quickly learn and incorporate this process into their clinical decision making. Our hope is that the application of this process to clinical practice will result in overall improved patient care.

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