



Bias

A faulty assumption in a study that makes things appear differently from how they really are.

Biological Sense

A criterion for judging causality.

The extent to which a hypothesized causal association is coherent with previously existing biological or medical knowledge.

Cause

Anything that produces an effect.

Chance

To occur accidentally. To occur without design. A coincidence.

Coherence

A criterion for judging causality.

The extent to which a hypothesized causal association is compatible with pre-existing theory and knowledge.

Confound

To confuse.

Confounder

A third factor that can make it appear that an observed exposure causes an outcome. An unobserved exposure that is both associated with an observed exposure and is an actual cause of an outcome.

Consistency

A criterion for judging causality.

Finding similar results in studies done in different investigations, using different populations, and using different methods.

Dose / Response Relationship

A criterion for judging causality.

The degree to which risk increases as exposure increases.

Interpret

To give the meaning of, explain, or make clear.

Multiple Causes

A combination of causes or an alternative cause that produces the effect.

Reversed Time Order

When the hypothesized time order of an exposure and an outcome is actually reversed and the outcome really comes before the exposure.

Risk Factor

An exposure that increases the likelihood of a specific outcome.

Sample

A selection of people from a population.

Selection Bias

A faulty assumption in a study because of a systematic difference in how subjects were chosen to be in the study.

Strength of Association

A criterion for judging causality.

The size of the relative risk.

Time Order

A criterion for judging causality.

The degree to which evidence can show that the hypothesized cause actually came before the outcome.