

Literature Search and Data Sources

In a short paragraph, please succinctly describe your search strategy, the key word(s) used, the date(s) of the search, and the data sources you accessed in identifying the highest-quality evidence on your topic. By "data sources," we mean sources such as Cochrane reviews and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, in addition to a PubMed search using the Clinical Query function (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>). Do not list the actual references you found in each source; simply include them in your bibliography.

We strongly recommend that you search the following freely accessible evidence-based sources of information and also consult our [EBM Toolkit](#).

As part of your paragraph, please also include a statement about the use of individual characteristic classification variables (eg, race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.), if applicable. Please see the sample paragraph below. Additionally, you can reference the resources in the Equity Toolkit to help evaluate studies for bias and their influence on health disparities: <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/authors.html#05>

If studies used individual characteristic classification variables in analyses or models and you choose to include this information in your manuscript, your manuscript should clearly state the following: (1) what the variables are truly measuring (i.e., is self-identified race acting as an indicator of systemic racism?); (2) what hypothesis or research question justifies their inclusion; and (3) how the variables were defined/identified in the included studies.

If you believe that there are studies that have important information even though there were questions about how individual characteristic classification variables were identified, please include a statement to the effect in your manuscript. As an example of the limitations inherent in this process, we acknowledge that many studies more than a few years old offered participants only the binary male/female option for gender identify. A brief statement that acknowledges this issue when that study is utilized is acceptable.

The *AFP* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is happy to help with issues like this. Please contact the editor assigned to your manuscript with questions about how to review and evaluate this information in a particular study.

Some examples of how two individual characteristic classification variables, in this case race and gender, are not clearly identified or are identified inappropriately include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Race and gender are key demographics leading to specific outcome recommendations, yet there is no mention in the study about how race and gender were defined.
- The study investigators assigned race/ethnicity or gender based on the patient's appearance, the patient's first or last name, or other subjective assessment.
- Authors make overarching statements about entire ethnicities or races in their conclusions based on country location of the study.
- Authors offered only male/female as binary options for gender and made overarching assumptions about other demographic groups that are nonbinary.

Sample Data Sources paragraph:

Data Sources: A PubMed search was completed in Clinical Queries using the key terms gout and hyperuricemia. The search included meta-analyses, randomized controlled trials, clinical trials, and reviews. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Effective Healthcare Reports, the Cochrane database, DynaMed, and Essential Evidence Plus were also searched. We critically reviewed studies that used patient categories such as race and/or gender but did not define how these categories were assigned, stating their limitations in the text. Search date: November 18, 2022.

Websites for Sources of Evidence-Based Clinical Information:

Free Access Sites

[ACCESSSS](#)

McMaster University's compendium of pre-appraised evidence to support clinical decisions. Content is presented in a hierarchical way, with the highest level of available evidence listed first.

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#)

In particular, see [AHRQ's Effective Healthcare Reports](#) on various clinical topics.

Note: Many of these reports are published in AFP under the [Implementing AHRQ Effective Health Care Reviews](#) department collection.

[Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews](#)

Free for abstracts only, which in most cases provide the key findings of interest. The complete review requires a subscription. The Cochrane database contains systematic reviews of narrowly focused clinical questions (e.g., "Colchicine for treating acute gout attacks") as opposed to broad, general reviews of topics (e.g., "Management of an acute gout attack").

Note: AFP publishes summaries of Cochrane abstracts in [Cochrane for Clinicians](#).

[ECRI Guidelines Trust](#)

Repository of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines, appraised using the National Academy of Medicine's Standards for Trustworthy Clinical Practice Guidelines.

[National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health](#)

Although NCCIH has been criticized for political interference and questionable science, we include it in this list because a few comprehensive sources of information in this field are freely available.

[Trip](#) (Turning Research Into Practice)

Contains links to a wide range of journal articles, medical organization clinical guidelines, online medical references, and other sources. A limited version is freely available; additional content requires an annual subscription.

[U.S. Preventive Services Task Force](#)

Premier source of evidence-based, graded recommendations for clinical preventive services.

Note: AFP publishes [Recommendations and Reports from the USPSTF](#) as well as CME case studies in the [Putting Prevention Into Practice](#) series.

Subscription Required Sites

Most of these are point-of-care clinical information and decision support tools. These sites provide important background information, but authors should review the primary source to use as a citation for the article.

[DynaMed](#)

[Essential Evidence Plus](#)

Includes POEMS (collections of patient-oriented evidence that matters).

[Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database](#)

Reviews of the use of natural medicines in the treatment of various diseases.

[Natural Medicines](#)

Database of dietary supplements, natural medicines, and complementary, alternative, and integrative therapies.

[PEPID](#)

[UpToDate](#)

To ensure adequate searching on your topic, we strongly recommend that the above sources be reviewed, in addition to a PubMed search using the [Clinical Query function](#). This is done by using the provided link, or by going to the PubMed home page, and selecting "Clinical queries" from the lower center of the screen.