

Table: Approaches used to mention and interpret quality assessment in diagnostic reviews

Approach	Number N=53	Example
Quality mentioned in abstract	19 (36%)^a	
Quality in methods	14 (26%)	"The quality of studies was assessed by QUADAS score."
Quality in results	6 (11%)	"The sensitivity analysis of 10 high quality studies (a score of ≥ 4) showed a pooled sensitivity of 94% and pooled specificity of 0.95"
Quality in conclusion	5 (9%)	"The observed high sensitivity of the punch biopsy derived from all studies is probably the result of verification bias"
Quality mentioned in the main text	49 (92%)^b	
Results of quality assessment reported, no mention in discussion or conclusion	13 (25%)	Results presented as table of individual QUADAS items. No further discussion or interpretation of results
Results of quality assessment reported and discussed, but quality not linked to conclusion	24 (45%)	Discussion as limitation only: "Fourth, the variability in the quality of the primary studies may introduce important limitations for the interpretation of this review study" Conclusion: "Based on the results of this systematic review, F-18 FDG PET (PET/CT) was useful in ruling in extrahepatic metastases of HCC and valuable for ruling out the recurrent HCC"
Results of quality assessment reported and discussed, and conclusions regarding test accuracy linked to conclusion	14 (26%)	"In conclusion, the observed high sensitivity and low specificity of the colposcopy-directed punch biopsy for highgrade CIN might be a result of verification bias. The sensitivity looks high but is probably a spurious finding caused by the fact that most studies restricted excision mainly to women with a positive punch biopsy".

^a Quality was mentioned in one or more sections in the abstract

^b Quality was mentioned in one or more sections in the main text