

Assessment of risk of bias in comparative diagnostic accuracy systematic reviews: an overview of reviews

Background & aim

- Comparative diagnostic test accuracy systematic reviews (DTA reviews) should assess the risk of bias (RoB) of test comparisons in included studies.
- We investigated how comparative DTA reviews assessed the RoB of test comparisons in primary studies.

Methods

- We included comparative DTA reviews indexed in MEDLINE from January 1st to December 31st 2017.
- Two assessors independently identified comparative DTA reviews and extracted data on methods used to assess RoB.

Results

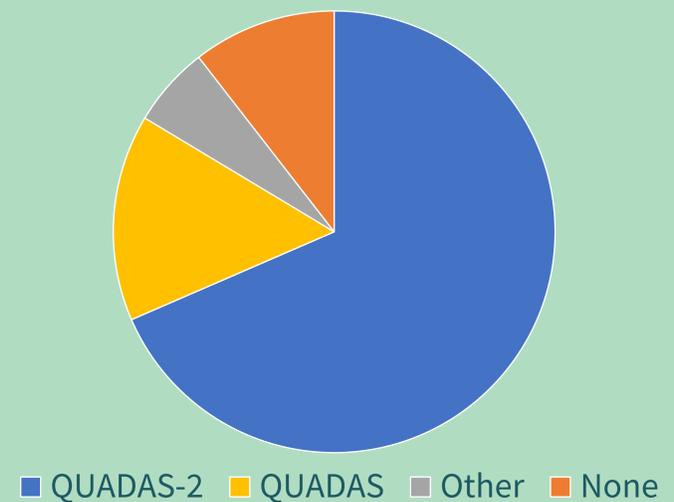
- We included **238** comparative DTA reviews.
- Only **two reviews (0.8%)** conducted RoB assessment of **test comparisons** undertaken in primary studies.
- **Neither** used a RoB tool specifically designed to assess bias in test comparisons.

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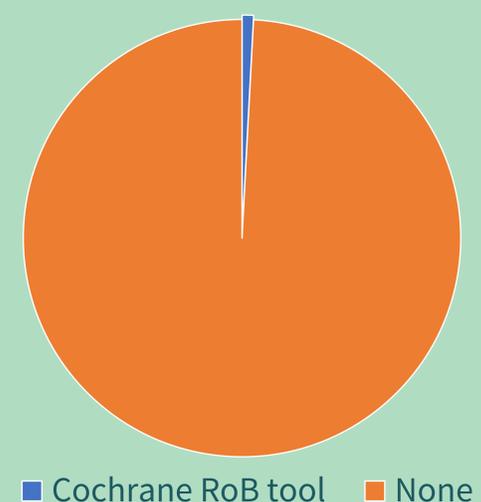
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RoB tools for **single test accuracy** used in comparative DTA reviews.



RoB tools for **test comparisons** used in comparative DTA reviews.



Conclusion

RoB assessment of **test comparisons** is **uncommon** in comparative DTA reviews. Guidance on how to assess and incorporate RoB in comparative DTA reviews is needed.