MEDICAL STATISTICS from A to Z

From 'Abortion rate' to 'Zygosity determination', this accessible introduction to the terminology of medical statistics describes more than 1500 terms, all clearly explained, illustrated and defined in non-technical language, without any mathematical formulae! With the majority of terms revised and updated and the addition of more than 100 brand new definitions, this new edition will enable medical students to quickly grasp the meaning of any of the statistical terms they encounter when reading the medical literature. Furthermore, annotated comments are used judiciously to warn the unwary of some of the common pitfalls that accompany some cherished biomedical statistical techniques. Wherever possible, the definitions are supplemented with a reference to further reading, where the reader may gain a deeper insight, so whilst the definitions are easily disgestible, they also provide a stepping stone to a more sophisticated comprehension. Statistical terminology can be quite bewildering for clinicians: this guide will be a lifesaver.

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MEDICAL STATISTICS
from A to Z

A Guide for Clinicians and Medical Students

Second Edition

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Preface to the second edition

In the second edition of Medical Statistics from A to Z I have added many new definitions and taken the opportunity to correct and clarify a number of entries. More references are also provided that point readers to more detailed accounts of topics.

Preface to the first edition

Clinicians, research workers in the health sciences, and even medical students often encounter terms from medical statistics and related areas in their work, particularly when reading medical journals and other relevant literature. The aim of this guide is to provide such people with nontechnical definitions of many such terms. Consequently, no mathematical nomenclature or formulae are used in the definitions. Those readers interested in such material will be able to find it in one of the many standard statistical texts now available and in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Statistics.* In addition, readers seeking more information about a particular topic will hopefully find the references given with the majority of entries of some help; whenever possible, these involve medical rather than statistical journals, and introductory statistical texts rather than those that are more advanced. (References are not given for terms such as mean, variance and critical region for which further details are easily available in most introductory medical statistics texts.)

Several forms of cross-referencing are used. Terms in courier new appear as a separate headword elsewhere in the dictionary, although this procedure is used in a relatively limited way with headwords defining frequently occurring terms such as random variable, probability and sample not referred to in this way. Some entries simply refer readers to another entry. This may indicate that the terms are synonymous or that the term is discussed more conveniently under another entry. In the latter case, the term is printed in *italics* in the main entry. Entries are in alphabetical order using the letter-by-letter rather than the word-by-word convention.

Of the many sources of material I have consulted in the preparation of this book, I would like to mention two that have been of particular help, namely the *Encyclopedia of Biostatistics* and the *Dictionary of Epidemiology.*

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