

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF DISEASE UNIT

Understanding and Using an Article about the Frequency of Clinical Manifestations of Disease

Objectives:

After working through this package, you should be able to:

1. Ask an answerable foreground question about the frequency of clinical manifestations of disease.
2. Appraise an article about the frequency of clinical manifestations of disease for risk of bias, importance, and applicability.
3. Apply the appraised evidence to a clinical decision.

Assignment:

1. Read the clinical scenario, and frame an answerable foreground question about the frequency of clinical manifestations of disease as it applies to this clinical topic.
2. Read the enclosed article by Singh *et al.*
3. Read the enclosed Users' Guides article: Richardson WS, Wilson MC, Williams JW, Jr, Moyer VA, Naylor CD, for the Evidence-Based Medicine Working Group. Users' guides to the medical literature. XXIV. How to use and article on the clinical manifestations of disease. JAMA 2000; 284: 869 – 875.
4. Complete your appraisal of the Singh *et al* article using the structured worksheet provided.

Clinical Scenario:

At a recent quality improvement rounds, a discussion of a patient's received care has led to the formation of a quality improvement team. The patient is a 71-year-old woman of northern European ethnic background who presented with an episode of visual blurring for less than an hour. Since her clinical findings were normal at the time and she recovered fully, she was initially sent home without a diagnosis and without treatment. At follow up, she reported recurrent episodes, with one including some transient monocular blindness. After a series of specialty consultations, she was found to have giant cell arteritis (GCA) with bilateral temporal artery involvement, and treatment of her arteritis led to resolution of her symptoms with no recurrence.

During the quality improvement rounds, the case was presented and discussed as providing some signals for quality improvement, particularly related to the delay in diagnosis of arteritis and

whether this was preventable, along with the delay in instituting cause-specific treatment and the possible harms from treatments given for atherosclerosis.

You have been asked to join the quality improvement team that has been formed to address whether your clinical service should adopt a policy of searching for GCA in every older adult patient with new visual blurring. During the first meeting, a disagreement breaks out about whether anyone could be expected to diagnose this patient's illness, for as one person stated, "This is a rare complication of this disease and nobody really knows about it." You ask team members to estimate, based on what they know now BEFORE looking it up, how frequently visual disturbances occur in patients with giant cell arteritis.

On the 10 cm line below, please estimate how often adult patients with proved GCA can present with visual disturbances, on a scale of frequency from 0 to 100%.

0 100%

The team leader asks you to work with the librarian to find the answer to this question for the next meeting, to inform the group's deliberations. The team's librarian asks you to frame the foreground question about the frequency of clinical manifestations of disease.

Your question:

Armed with your question, you and the librarian find a citation that appears to address your question, so you retrieve that for your review.

Enclosed Materials:

1. Singh AG, Kermani TA, Crowson CS, Weyand CM, Matteson EL, Warrington KH. Visual manifestations in giant cell arteritis: Trend over 5 decades in a population-based cohort. *J Rheumatol* 2015; 42: 309 – 315.
2. Richardson WS, Wilson MC, Williams JW, Jr, Moyer VA, Naylor CD, for the Evidence-Based Medicine Working Group. Users' guides to the medical literature. XXIV. How to use and article on the clinical manifestations of disease. *JAMA* 2000; 284: 869 – 875.
3. Worksheet for the evaluation of an article on the clinical manifestations of disease.