Critical appraisal – Case control questions

This is a modified version of the BestBETs critical appraisal checklist for case-control studies. See <https://bestbets.org/>.

Paper appraised: *(authors, year and title)*

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| **Introduction** |  |
| Are the aims clearly stated? |  |
| **Methods** |
| Is the study design suitable for the aims? |  |
| Was a clear case and control definition given?What were they? |  |
| Is the control group appropriate? |  |
| Was the data collected in the same way for cases and controls? |  |
| What exposures were measured? |  |
| Is it clear what measurements were carried out in the study? |  |
| Were the correct measurements chosen? Do they that reflect (or are they strongly related to) the outcome of interest? |  |
| Were previously established validated methods used to make the measurements?(e.g. Glasgow pain score, International Units etc.) |  |
| Did the exposure precede the outcome? |  |
| What outcomes were measured? |  |
| Are the outcomes clinically relevant? |  |
| Are the statistical methods described? |  |
| Was the statistical significance level stated? |  |
| Was the sample size justified? |  |
| Was ethical approval obtained? |  |
| Overall, are the methods described in enough detail that you could repeat them?  |  |
| **Results** |  |
| Were the basic data adequately described? |  |
| Do the numbers add up?Are all subjects accounted for? |  |
| Was the statistical significance (p value) stated in the results?Is this consistent with the methods? (It should be stated in the sample size or power calculation) |  |
| What were the main findings/key results? |  |
| **Discussion and conclusion** |  |
| What do the main findings/key results mean? |  |
| Was a causal relationship between the outcome and exposure suggested?Is it justified? |  |
| Are the negative findings\* discussed?How are the negative findings\* interpreted? |  |
| Does the discussion reflect the results? |  |
| **Interpretation** |  |
| What are the clinical implications of this study?Are the subjects in the study similar to those you see? |  |
| **General** |
| Who funded this study? |  |

\*Results where there was not a statistically significant difference found