

Having trouble deciding what’s most important to read? Look to the stars

ACP Journal Club presents a new feature to guide your reading decisions: star ratings for all articles featured in each issue.

The stars are averaged scores for clinical relevance and newsworthiness from the McMaster Online Rating of Evidence (MORE) system. This Internet-based system gathers ratings of new articles, already assessed for scientific merit, from our sentinel readers, a panel of over 2000 physicians from around the world. Each sentinel reader assigns ratings to new articles for relevance and newsworthiness on a scale from 1 to 7 (Table). These ratings are then averaged for at least 3 raters for each pertinent discipline. For example, an article about diabetes would be sent to raters in primary care and raters in endocrinology and then would have ratings from at least 3 raters averaged for each discipline. Thus, if your time for reading is limited (and whose isn't?), look for the articles rated highest by colleagues in your discipline. Ratings that average 6 or higher will help you to keep your knowledge up to date for essential new evidence.

Rating scales for relevance and newsworthiness

Relevance Scale

7	Directly and highly relevant
6	Definitely relevant
5	Probably relevant
4	Possibly relevant—likely of indirect or peripheral relevance at best
3	Possibly not relevant
2	Probably not relevant: content only remotely related
1	Definitely not relevant: completely unrelated content area

Newsworthiness Scale

7	Useful information, most practitioners in my discipline definitely don't know this (unless they have read this article)
6	Useful information, most practitioners in my discipline probably don't know this
5	Useful information, most practitioners in my discipline possibly don't know this
4	Useful information, but most practitioners in my discipline possibly already know this
3	Useful information, but most practitioners in my discipline probably already know this
2	It probably doesn't matter whether they know this or not
1	Not of direct clinical interest

Who are the raters? They are all practicing doctors who have volunteered to help us select the very best new studies and reviews for your attention. These sentinel readers enjoy the benefits of seeing critically appraised articles “hot off the press,” the opportunity to compare their ratings and comments with those of other raters, access to the most highly rated articles in their own discipline, and the ability to earn CME credits that are automatically recorded. We invite you to consider joining MORE if you have the following qualifications:

- fully completed formal training in a medical discipline
- in independent (unsupervised) clinical practice at least part-time
- reliable Internet access
- ability to respond quickly to e-mail requests for rating articles (rating an article takes about 10 minutes).

If you are interested in becoming a sentinel reader or would like more information, please visit the MORE Web site at <http://hiru.mcmaster.ca/MORE> or e-mail us at more@mcmaster.ca. We hope you will enjoy, and benefit from, the new star rating feature of *ACP Journal Club*. Use it to focus in on the most important new findings to support evidence-based clinical practice.

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