

Transcript

One minute methods – meta analysis

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A meta-analysis combines multiple studies and uses statistical techniques to integrate their results. We can think of it as a study of studies. Meta-analyses can help us establish whether there is a reliable effect of some cause and how big that effect is. Sometimes there are patterns and trends in the data that only become clear when we pool together lots of results. Combining research in this way can also help us settle long-standing controversies that arise when individual studies have conflicting results. When drawing on lots of different studies, we need to be careful that we are comparing like with like, not oversimplifying the big picture, or overlooking important details. When done correctly, meta-analyses are a useful method for making sense of a large amount of data, summarizing what we know, and what we don't.