Shrewsbury and Telford Health Libraries

Odds Ratio Diagrams (also known as Forest plots or blobbograms)



The Intervention being studied and the specific outcome shown.

There may be several different outcomes measured for each intervention.



Details of the individual trials, number of patients: first figure is the number of patients experiencing the outcome in that study (out of the total undergoing the treatment). For example, in Lundorff 42 out of 48 patients had a successful outcome under laparoscopic conservative surgery, compared to 55 out of 57 for open conservative surgery. The 'line of no effect'. Results crossing this line cannot show whether the intervention is better or worse than the control. Results that fall to the left indicate less of an outcome, in this case, less primary treatment success for laparoscopic conservative surgery. Note that if was a 'bad' outcome being measured, we would want the results to be on the left of the line; if a good outcome, we would want the result on the right. The centre of the diamond shows the combined results (in this case, an odd-ratio of 0.22), with the arms extending out to represent the confidence interval (in this case 0.08 to 0.61). As no part of the diamond crosses the line of no effect, we can be 95% confident that this result is significant.

The line of no effect would be zero for weighted mean

This diagram shows that laparoscopic surgery (treatment) is not as successful as open conservative surgery (control) for tubal ectopic pregnancy (as there is less of a beneficial outcome for the treatment compared to the control)