

Categories in the evaluation of the source and the strength of evidence. Modified from Eccles and colleagues 1998² and Pedersen and colleagues 2001.³ (RCT=Randomized Controlled Trials, N-RCT=Non-Randomized Controlled Trials).

Grade	Source of evidence	Strength of evidence
Ia	A correctly conducted meta-analysis of RCT or a correctly conducted systematic review	Good
Ib	A correctly conducted RCT, not contradicted by other RCT	
IIa	At least one well designed but N-RCT, not contradict by other N-RCT	Fair
IIb	Cohorte studies (not controlled, not randomized)	
III	Descriptive studies, e.g. Case control studies Contradictory RCT or N-RCT	Insufficient
IV	Opinions of respected authorities based on clinical experience, textbooks, editorials or conclusions of expert committees No studies Studies which allow no conclusions	None