The Bottom Line

Word document template

Please use this in combination with the TBL Guide for Authors, which explains each section in more detail.

# Title

Copy the title from the paper

## Citation

Vancouver format. First author only. Include DOI where available.

# Clinical Question

* PICO(T) format question

# Design

* What was the study design
* Briefly describe the methods, such as recruitment process, randomisation method, allocation concealment method
* Outline the statistical power calculation. How many patients were they expecting to recruit?

# Setting

* Where was the study based?
* When was data collected?

# Population

* Inclusion criteria
* Exclusion criteria
* Number of patients screened, recruited and analysed

# Intervention

* What was the intervention?

# Comparison

* What was the control?

## Common management

* Was there a management algorithm or plan that was common to both groups?

# Outcomes

## Primary outcome

* Describe the primary outcome, the observed effect size and the 95% confidence intervals for the estimated population effect

## Secondary outcomes

* Describe the relevant secondary outcomes and briefly what the findings were

## Tertiary data, subgroup or post-hoc analyses

* Where interesting, relevant or useful, include information about other reported data. This is often in the supplementary data

## Data table

* Sometimes, outcomes are best expressed in a table. Use the Excel datasheet to formulate a table if you feel it adds something.

# Authors’ Conclusion

* Paraphrase the conclusion from the paper

# Strengths

* Outline particular strengths from the paper
* These may be related to how relevant the clinical question is, or how the design was particularly good for answering this question
* Attempts to minimise bias are worth noting, as this may improve the internal validity

# Weaknesses

* Outline the weaknesses that you feel may affect the relevance, internal or external validity
* Are there notable biases? Which way and to what extend might these biases affect the outcome?

# The Bottom Line

* Weigh up the paper, and particularly consider:

1. How accurate are the results? — internal validity
2. What the results are? — effect size
3. How generalisable the results are to our patients? — external validity

* Then report your key message regarding the paper in one or two sentences. Should this paper result in a change of our practice?

## Links

Provide any URL links to related online material, such as the original paper or PubMed abstract, commentaries, podcasts etc.

## Metadata

Provide your name and contact details

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