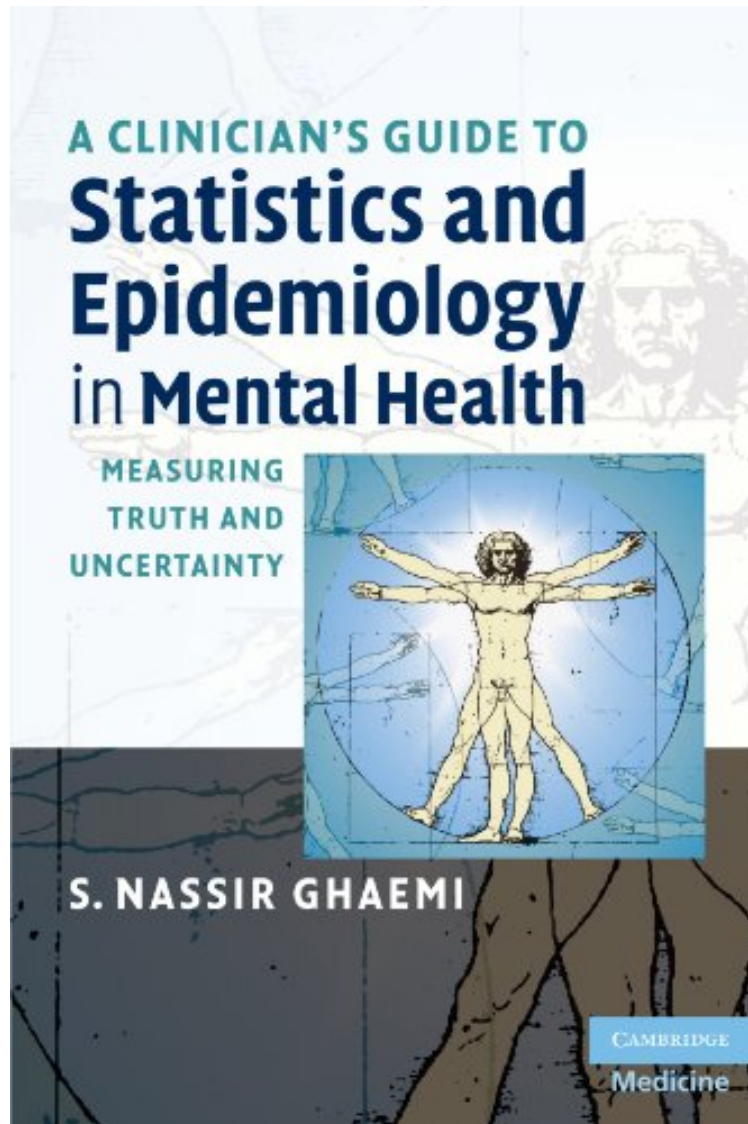


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A Clinician's Guide to Statistics and Epidemiology in Mental Health: Measuring Truth and Uncertainty (Cambridge Medicine (Paperback))

S. Nassir Ghaemi

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S. Nassir Ghaemi : A Clinician's Guide to Statistics and Epidemiology in Mental Health: Measuring Truth and Uncertainty (Cambridge Medicine (Paperback)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Clinician's Guide to Statistics and Epidemiology in Mental Health: Measuring Truth

and Uncertainty (Cambridge Medicine (Paperback)):

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Concise text full of wisdom
By George Dawson
There may be a professor of psychiatry out there who does a better job than Nassir Ghaemi in transmitting his wisdom directly to you - but in twenty years I have not found one. I have read the authors research papers for years. As an editor, I became familiar with his book "The Concepts of Psychiatry" as I considered the philosophical aspects of the field. His writing is always clear and his thinking consistently brilliant. In this brief volume on statistics and epidemiology his historical and original observations and descriptions of recent concepts is worth the price of purchase alone. A good example is his chapter on meta-analysis. He reminds the reader why this statistical method was invented in the first place and goes on to discuss significant limitations, significant historical critiques, and where the method might be useful. His opinions are well thought out and in a few brief pages he touches on issues that seem to be rarely discussed in the literature. This is an important chapter for a physician to read during a time when more and more meta-analyses are considered the gospel and end up as front page truths. He also provides a "defense and criticism" of evidence based medicine. He provides a philosophical context for the discussion and reminds us of "the cult of the Swan-Ganz catheter". Anyone who was an intern or resident in intensive care settings in the 1980s and early 1990s can recall the widespread use of this device despite the lack of evidence in randomized clinical trials (RCTs). It became the standard of care despite the lack of evidence. He pays homage to Feinstein his original observations that the evidence for evidence-based medicine goes beyond RCTs. The remaining chapters are concise discussions of statistics and epidemiology but they are anything but dry. An example would be his discussion of effect estimation and the number needed to treat or NNT method he describes the calculation and its advantages. He goes on to describe the meaning of particular numbers and also why the context is important. He uses a timely example of the issue of antidepressants and whether or not they lead to suicidality. This book succeeds as a volume that can rapidly bring the clinician and researcher up to speed on most current topics in statistics and epidemiology in medicine. It is not a book that reviews mathematical theory. It does not provide exhaustive calculations and examples. It is written for clinicians. It is a book that could provide a basis for discussion and seminars in this field for advanced residents using some of the author's references or recent literature searches to look at specific concepts. It could also be developed into a much more comprehensive text on the subject. Dr. Ghaemi brings a very unique viewpoint to the subject matter and he has produced a very readable book that I highly recommend.
George Dawson, MD
9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Excellent (best I have ever seen) book on Biostatistics in Mental Health
By Jeffrey S. Barkin MD
As a medical director in a pharmacy benefit company, rigorous evaluation of clinical trials is a large part of my responsibilities. Medical providers/prescribers are baraged with information from the medical literature, some excellent, some deceptive and everything in between. It is therefore critical, in making healthcare decisions, to be able to separate and understand this literature. Ghaemi's book is a thorough treatment of how to understand the medical literature. The volume takes the reader through bias, randomization, chance, and outcome. Relevant metrics such as effect size and number needed to treat are intelligently, yet understandably, described. The limitations of p values are excellently presented! Ghaemi does a nice job on hypothesis testing. I enjoyed his refreshing description of statistical principles from a historical and philosophic approach. This is a terrific volume that is critical reading for clinicians, researchers, medical scientists, and policy/decision makers. As such, highly recommended.
2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I wish we used this book for my class instead
By Elizabeth_Wallace
I'm finishing my master's degree in counseling, and I have found this book to be more useful than the 400 page sedative that was my research methods class text. While engaging in research is interesting, reading about the process often isn't. Dr. Ghaemi's writing is easy to understand and engaging. I have found this book to be helpful as I am studying for the National Counselor Exam, which includes a section on research methods and of course tests on the same material as what is in this book. Worthwhile read.

Accessible and clinically relevant, *A Clinician's Guide to Statistics and Epidemiology in Mental Health* describes statistical concepts in plain English with minimal mathematical content, making it perfect for the busy health professional. Using clear language in favour of complex terminology, limitations of statistical techniques are emphasized, as well as the importance of interpretation - as opposed to 'number-crunching' - in analysis. Uniquely for a text of this kind, there is extensive coverage of causation and the conceptual, philosophical and political factors involved, with forthright discussion of the pharmaceutical industry's role in psychiatric research. By creating a greater understanding of the world of research, this book empowers health professionals to make their own judgments on which statistics to believe - and why.