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 **Principles of medical statistics.**Author(s) : [HILL, A. B.](#)Book : [Principles of medical statistics.](#) 1971 pp.ix+390 pp.

Abstract : *Principles of medical statistics* has for many years given valuable workers concerned with the quantitative assessment of medical problems. publication of the first edition in 1937 with 171 pages, the text has been revised and enlarged, although in this latest edition the changes reflect attention to detail rather than the introduction of major new topics.

The contents cover the whole groundwork of medical statistics, including probability, data, calculation of the mean and standard deviation, confidence limits, sign test, correlation (although there is little on linear regression), standardized rates and ratios. There are also chapters on sampling, clinical trials and fallacies and difficulties.

material in this edition includes a short additional discussion of the null hypothesis, an example of a general application of the indirect method of standardization and a description of the uses of placebos in matched-pair trials.

The emphasis of the book is on the practical application of statistical methods to medical problems, and throughout the text the principles are amply illustrated by examples which have been brought up to date where necessary in this edition. No knowledge of mathematics is assumed, but at the end of the book the 25 exercises require some arithmetic manipulation for their solution. There are full answers to the exercises, with references to the appropriate chapters of the text.

There are minor points which could be criticized. For example, some readers might be confused by the use of the letter n to denote both the sample size and the degrees of freedom. The advantages of stratified random sampling could be more fully illustrated. The chapter on sampling appeared after the chapters on the mean and standard deviation. However, this is a very well written book; the arguments are convincing because the examples are realistic and much attention is paid to the interpretation of the results of statistical analyses. *Principles of medical statistics* seems likely to remain the basic text of medical statistics for many more years to come. *J. Osborn*

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Clinical Diagnosis and Management by Laboratory Methods, John Bernard Henry, ed. Philadelphia: WB Saunders, 2001, 1512 pp., \$99.00. ISBN 0-7216-8864-0, the crisis, by definition, is public.
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