A Worksheet for Articles about Prognosis

1. **Determine Relevance:** *Is this article worth taking the time to read? If the answer to any of these questions is No, it may be better to read other articles first.*

   Based on the conclusion of the abstract or article:
   
   A. **Will this information, if true, have a direct bearing on the health of your patients and is it something they will care about?**
      
      Yes (go on)  No (stop)

   B. **Is the problem addressed one that is common to your practice?**
      
      Yes (go on)  No (stop)

   C. **Will this information, if true, require you to change your current practice?**
      
      Yes (go on)  No (stop)

2. **Determine Validity:** *If the answers to all three questions above are Yes, then continued assessment of the article is mandatory. Study design flaws are common; fatal flaws are arresting.*

   D. **Was an “inception cohort” assembled?** (Did the investigators identify a specific group of people and follow them forward in time?)
      
      Yes  No (stop)

   E. **Were the criteria for entry into the study objective and reasonable?**
      
      Yes  No (stop)

   F. **Was follow-up of subjects adequate (at least 70%-80%)?**
      
      Yes  No (stop)

   G. **Were the patients similar to yours, in terms of age, sex, race, severity of disease, and other factors that might influence the course of the disease?**
      
      Yes  No (stop)

   H. **Where did the subjects come from — was the referral pattern specified?**
      
      Yes  No

   I. **Were outcomes assessed objectively and blindly?**
      
      Yes  No

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