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Guidelines for Utilizing References

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References are a major component of the review processes at CIMRO and help validate reviewers' opinions. While standard "textbook" references are often overlooked, they actually may be utilized very effectively to highlight core principles of patient management. Standard references also help orient those in our clients' quality departments to accepted practice norms and expectations. For these reasons, including one or two standard references in reports typically creates a firm foundation for the overall review.

It is important that references be timely, especially in discussions of "cutting edge" technology, treatments, etc. References should be as up to date as possible, preferably five or fewer years old. However, it is understood that an article about a particular topic may not have been published in some time, or principles from older references may not have changed and are still relevant.

Regardless of the timing of a particular reference or published article, an effective way to utilize these works is to actually cite a particular part of the reference by incorporating a quote or paraphrasing a segment. *An example might be: "A drug-eluting stent was used in this case. Although many cardiologists would prefer a bare-metal stent, this appears to be a moot point clinically. Smith et al note there were no statistical difference in thromboses with the two types of stents at one year.²"*

When Internet sources are used, include the date you last saw the article online. When applicable, make specific reference to the part(s) of the online article you used. Abstracts of these references often may be obtained by simply clicking on the article or publication listed.

The CIMRO staff are available for guidance with exploring appropriate articles for references. Feel free to contact us for help. Below are some tips that might help you:

- References should be CURRENT (within five years) and evidence-based to the maximum extent possible. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Peer-reviewed scientific journals or journal articles
 - Academic and professional books written by experts in the relevant field and from a respected publisher
 - Specialty-specific guidelines, books or position statements written from nationally or internationally recognized expert bodies
 - UpToDate articles
 - Drug or product information inserts
- Please list the title of the work(s) cited and, where applicable, the author, publication, year of publication, volume, number and page numbers, and Web site.