

PHILOSOPHY

# ARE RANDOMIZED CLINICAL TRIALS GOLD STANDARD?

6.10.2006

A new paper in the [Deutsche Ärzteblatt](#) argues that there should be alternatives to RCTs. The reasons are manifold

- selection bias towards more severely ill patients
- selection towards too homogeneous samples
- patients may decline participation
- physician may decline participation
- bias towards larger cities and universities
- usually “hard” endpoints that ignore quality of life, compliance, side effects
- usually only short time studies
- protocol may deviate from daily practice in medical routine

Community-based studies may therefore not be as bad, yea, yea.

## Addendum

An extended and reworked version of this blog can be found in issue 45 of the “[Deutsche Ärzteblatt](#)”, page A3019, 10th November 2006.