

JOKE, PHILOSOPHY

# SIGNIFICANT PHRASES TO HIDE A NON SIGNIFICANT RESULT

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One of those [papers](#) I wish I would have had the idea ;-)

The question is how phrases expressing nonsignificant results have been reported in RCTs over the past 30 years.

incredible ... and it is even tortured science to rely on  $p < 0.05$  – for a discussion see references [1](#), [2](#) and [3](#).

Phrase	Total RCTs
Marginally significant	7,735
All but significant	7,015
A nonsignificant trend	3,442
Failed to reach statistical significance	2,578
A strong trend	1,700
Nearly significant	1,391
A clear trend	1,372
An increasing trend	1,202
Only marginally significant	1,149
A significant trend	1,124
Potentially significant	1,104
Significant tendency	1,064
A positive trend	1,055
A decreasing trend	962
Marginal significance	887
A slight trend	885
Almost significant	813
A statistical trend	811
Approaching significance	796
Nominally significant	740
Quite significant	547
Near significant	546
An overall trend	445
Likely to be significant	425
Difference was apparent	409
Uncertain significance	383
Did not quite reach statistical significance	379
A weak trend	343
Marginally statistically significant	314
Tended to be significant	293
Possible significance	286
Not quite significant	266
A favorable trend	261
Just failed to reach statistical significance	252
A negative trend	225
Almost reached statistical significance	219
A possible trend	218
Fell short of significance	214
Not as significant	204
A small trend	185
A numerical trend	184
Slightly significant	182
Reached borderline significance	165
Near significance	156
Weakly significant	147
Moderately significant	146
An apparent trend	145
Barely significant	135
Practically significant	135
A definite trend	131
An interesting trend	129
Almost statistically significant	126
Marginally nonsignificant	101
Possibly significant	100
Significantly significant	100

RCT, randomized controlled trial.

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