A practical approach to evidence-based dentistry: VI: How to use a systematic review

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Background and Overview.
Dental practitioners face new clinical challenges on a daily basis. New treatment options and diagnostic tools are disseminated quickly, and the volume of articles and new evidence is overwhelming. Systematic reviews summarize and synthesize the available evidence related to diagnosis, therapy, prognosis, and harm for clinicians, patients, and decision makers. Such reviews represent one of the most powerful tools to translate knowledge into action.

Practical Implications.
The critical appraisal of this type of study involves assessing the risk of bias, results, and applicability of such study. The authors provide guidance for clinicians to critically appraise systematic reviews and apply the findings in clinical practice.