
Preface

The primary purpose of this book is to provide scientists with a broad survey of biostatistical methods. This book is intended for use by scientists in all disciplines. To this end, we present a series of biostatistical techniques illustrated with examples. Many of the examples are from biology and medicine. Elementary methods include descriptive statistics, study design, statistical inference, categorical variables, evaluation of diagnostic tests, comparison of means (t -test, nonparametric tests, and analysis of variance), linear regression, and logistic regression. All of these methods can be performed with paper, pencil, and a calculator in simple cases. The secondary purpose of this book is to introduce more complicated statistical methods requiring either collaboration with a biostatistician or use of a statistical package. Our goal is not to teach the reader how to use these methods but rather to teach the “language of statistics” so that collaborating with a biostatistician or deciphering a software manual is more productive.

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