

# Preface

This textbook on epidemiology is a companion to the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM. The *ActivEpi* CD-ROM provides a multimedia presentation of epidemiologic concepts commonly taught in an introductory course in epidemiology. *ActivEpi* CD-ROM uses a range of multimedia effects to motivate, explain, visualize, and apply introductory epidemiologic concepts, integrating video, animation, narration, text, and interactive question and answer sessions. Since individuals differ in their learning skills, the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM and *ActivEpi Companion Textbook* offer readers different but nevertheless intertwined options on how to learn epidemiology. The *ActivEpi* CD-ROM provides an exciting way of presenting epidemiologic concepts through use of animation. The *ActivEpi Companion Textbook* can be utilized as a hardcopy reference of the textual materials contained in the CD-ROM, as a resource for the practice exercises, as a general reference, or even a self-contained textbook. The *ActivEpi* CD-ROM and *ActivEpi Companion Textbook* can be used for self-study or for a course in epidemiology, either in a traditional classroom setting or in a distance learning setting.

In general, virtually all of the material on the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM is included in the *ActivEpi Companion Textbook*. Some of the narration on the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM was altered for the *Companion Textbook*. This difference occurs primarily when the CD-ROM narration refers to an animation on the screen. Another difference between the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM and the *Companion Textbook* is in the Study Questions and the Quizzes. On the CD-ROM, the answers are provided interactively. In the text, the Study Questions and Quizzes are sequentially numbered throughout each lesson with the answers provided at the end of the lesson. Finally, there are some interactive activities on the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM that cannot be duplicated in the text, such as the exercises using the Data Desk program.

The 2nd Edition of the *ActivEpi Companion Textbook* is in step with the *ActivEpi* CD-ROM version 2. These updated versions of the *ActivEpi Companion Textbook* and CD-ROM have numerous improvements and have added sections on a number of topics, including indirect standardization, the standardized mortality ratio (SMR), and more details on how the exposure odds ratio estimates the risk ratio in a case-cohort study without the rare disease assumption and how the Mantel-Haenszel odds ratio estimates the incidence density ratio in a nested case-control study without the rare disease assumption. The 2nd Edition of the *ActivEpi Companion Textbook* now has a glossary.

ActivEpi Companion Textbook

A supplement for use with the ActivEpi CD-ROM

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2013, IX, 549 p. 649 illus., 5 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-1-4614-5427-4