1. Record Nr. UNINA9910300623603321

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Titolo	Evaluating Evidence of Mechanisms in Medicine : Principles and Procedures / / by Veli-Pekka Parkkinen, Christian Wallmann, Michael Wilde, Brendan Clarke, Phyllis Illari, Michael P Kelly, Charles Norell, Federica Russo, Beth Shaw, Jon Williamson
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cham : , : Springer International Publishing : , : Imprint : Springer, , 2018
ISBN	3-319-94610-2
Edizione	[1st ed. 2018.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (XVIII, 125 p. 14 illus.)
Collana	SpringerBriefs in Philosophy, , 2211-4556
Disciplina	610.1
Soggetti	Medicine - Philosophy Knowledge, Theory of Philosophy of Medicine Epistemology
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
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Sommario/riassunto

This book is open access under a CC BY license. This book is the first to develop explicit methods for evaluating evidence of mechanisms in the field of medicine. It explains why it can be important to make this evidence explicit, and describes how to take such evidence into account in the evidence appraisal process. In addition, it develops procedures for seeking evidence of mechanisms, for evaluating evidence of mechanisms, and for combining this evaluation with evidence of association in order to yield an overall assessment of effectiveness. Evidence-based medicine seeks to achieve improved health outcomes by making evidence explicit and by developing explicit methods for evaluating it. To date, evidence-based medicine has largely focused on evidence of association produced by clinical studies. As such, it has tended to overlook evidence of pathophysiological mechanisms and evidence of the mechanisms of action of interventions. The book offers a useful guide for all those whose work involves evaluating evidence in the health sciences, including those who need to determine the effectiveness of health interventions and those who need to ascertain the effects of environmental exposures.