

□ Conceptual Overreach

Definition: *Conceptual overreach* occurs when a study's **claims, interpretations, or conclusions exceed what the data or design can legitimately support**. It often involves stretching limited findings to make broad, unjustified theoretical or clinical assertions.

⚠ Common Signs

- Drawing **causal conclusions** from correlational data
- Extrapolating results from **narrow or artificial settings** to general populations
- Using surrogate endpoints (e.g., flow velocity) to make **clinical predictions** without real-world validation
- Framing exploratory findings as **definitive or guideline-changing**
- Overstating the novelty or impact of minor observations

□ Why It Matters

Conceptual overreach can:

- Mislead clinicians and policymakers
- Undermine scientific credibility
- Promote ineffective or unvalidated interventions
- Distort the direction of future research

□ Related Terms

- [methodological weakness](#)
- [causal inference](#)
- [rhetorical inflation](#)
- [surrogate endpoint fallacy](#)

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