

Network meta-analysis (NMA) is a relatively recent development, which extends principles of **meta-analysis** to the **evaluation** of multiple **treatments** in a single analysis. This is achieved by combining the direct and **indirect evidence**. **Direct evidence** refers to evidence obtained from **randomized control trials** (RCTs); for example, in a trial comparing treatments A and B, direct evidence is the estimate of relative effects between A and B. **Indirect evidence** refers to the evidence obtained through one or more common comparators.

in the absence of RCTs that directly evaluate A and B, interventions A and B can be compared indirectly if both have been compared to C in studies (forming an A-B-C “loop” of evidence). The combination of **direct evidence** and **indirect evidence** is called **mixed evidence**.

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Last update: **2024/06/07 02:48**

