

Speculative – Definition In scientific and academic writing, speculative refers to a statement, interpretation, or conclusion that is not directly supported by empirical evidence, but rather based on conjecture, inference, or untested assumptions.

□ **Examples in Context** A claim is speculative if it extrapolates beyond the data.

Suggesting a treatment “protects against stroke” without adjusting for confounders is speculative.

Correlation without mechanistic explanation or causal inference often leads to speculative reasoning.

⚠ **Why It Matters** Speculative assertions can:

Mislead readers about causality.

Overstate the clinical applicability of findings.

Undermine the credibility of the research if not clearly identified as hypothesis-generating.

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