

Measures of Disease Frequency

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1. Introduction

- Measures of disease frequency quantify how often health events occur in a population.
- They allow comparison of disease burden across groups and over time.

2. Incidence

- **Incidence rate:** the number of new cases occurring in a population over a period of time.
- **Cumulative incidence:** the proportion of an at-risk group developing disease during follow-up.
- Incidence measures the risk of acquiring disease.

3. Prevalence

- **Point prevalence:** the proportion of a population with disease at a single point in time.
- Prevalence depends on both incidence and the duration of disease.

4. Mortality and Related Measures

- **Mortality rate:** deaths occurring in a population over a period, reflecting fatal disease burden.
- **Case fatality rate:** the proportion of cases that die from a disease.

5. Population at Risk

- The denominator should include only those capable of developing the disease.
- Person-time accounts for varying lengths of follow-up among individuals.

6. Summary

- Frequency measures such as incidence, prevalence, and mortality describe disease burden and underpin comparison and planning in community health.