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Short summary

This paper compares different observational study designs that can be used to measure the association between an exposure and disease incidence. The paper discusses cohort studies, sub-samples from cohorts, and population-based or hospital-based case-control studies and compares their theoretical and practical advantages and disadvantages. If the study aim is to estimate not only associations but also absolute risks, cohort studies are required. Thus, choosing an appropriate design is crucial to achieving scientific objectives. The paper highlights how certain design features can reduce threats to study validity. The goal of the paper is to help readers choose the most appropriate study design, considering the study's scientific aims and practical constraints.