

Cause and Effect in Epidemiology

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Public health professionals who want to increase their familiarity with the basic concepts of epidemiology. It is recommended that people become familiar with material presented in the following modules: What is Epidemiology in Public Health?, Study Types in Epidemiology, Measuring Risk in Epidemiology, and Data Interpretation for Public Health Professionals.

FORMAT

This online module has audio narration and interactive exercises.

ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE

The module takes approximately forty-five minutes to complete.

LEAD COURSE DEVELOPER

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CO-PROVIDER

This course is co-provided by the University of Washington School of Nursing.

The University of Washington is an accredited provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Participants who successfully complete the course are eligible to receive 0.75 contact hours for a processing fee of \$35.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See <http://www.nwcphp.org/cause>



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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Determining the cause of a disease or the positive effect of a health activity is an important part of decision-making in public health. But how do we know if something actually does cause a disease or improve our health? Inferring causality is a step-by-step process requiring a variety of information. In this module, Dr. Holt discusses seven guidelines to use in determining whether a specific agent or activity causes a health outcome. She illustrates each guideline with a public health example.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe and distinguish between association and causality in epidemiology
- List and describe features of associations that support inferences of causality
- List the principal concerns in inferring causality

COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED

This module provides an awareness level training in the following epidemiology competency and subcompetency developed by the University of Washington (www.nwcphp.org/epi/competencies).

Competency	Subcompetency
Obtain, evaluate, and interpret public health information. (Competency 5)	A. Interpret epidemiology measures.

About the Course Developer

Victoria Holt, RN, MPH, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Epidemiology. She is also affiliated with the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, where she conducts research on women's reproductive health topics, and the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center, where she researches issues pertaining to intimate partner violence prevention. Dr. Holt leads the NWCPHP's Public Health Epidemiology Project and has taught at public health institutes in Alaska, Oregon, and Montana.