The Tyranny of Evidence Based Medicine
Is this the death of clinical judgement?
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Abstract
3 studies: Term Breech Trial(TBT), WHI study(WHI), Netherlands Planned Home Birth Birth Study(HBS), Results were released, media commented, public perception shifted and physicians were left to sort out the mass confusion, media hype and medicolegal sequelae.
A statement of no conflict of interest is now standard. A declaration of the **Limits of Applicability** by authors would be helpful in determining the use of EBM in a specific clinical setting.

Discussion
The TBT declared the preferred mode of delivery for Breech presentation as Cesarean. Reported quoted and embraced. Resultant loss of skills now confined to emergencies. Australian NSW Health directive mandates provision of vaginal breech delivery if mother wishes for vaginal delivery. The HBS was touted as evidence of Home birth safety and embraced by midwives eager to impose this model of care internationally. Concealment of late neonatal deaths 7-28 days was prematurely reassuring. Evidence, quality of evidence, levels of reliability, confidence intervals, exclusion and inclusion criteria, disqualifiers, limitations, strengths and weaknesses all point to providing **LIMITS OF APPLICABILITY** to a study, who it does not and ultimately asks the unspoken question facing every practitioner:

**IS MY PATIENT the AVERAGE patient?**
Are their features unique to this clinical scenario that favour the lesser supported intervention? Now the practice will be more dangerous as highly skilled operators are aging and deskilling.
The WHI declared danger in breast cancer rise with HRT. Media blitz resulted in 64% cessation of HRT in 1st year entrenching deep fear of HRT in public and embrace of unproven alternatives. Public unaware of limits of application of evidence and began self treating. Media down played lifestyle influences on results. Physicians forced to manage the fall out.

Conclusion
All studies should have a declaration of **Limits of Applicability** to assist with contextual interpretation of their findings.

References
1. Term Breech Trial: Lancet 2000 Hannah et al
2. WHI study JAMA 2002: 288;321-333
3. Netherlands Planned Home Birth Study: