

corres - white, James



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November 25, 1981

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Dear Jim:

I am only a year late in responding to your kind letter and series of reprints from Serge Renaud which I appreciate receiving and which I am returning to you. I think the cross sectional population comparison approach is interesting as a sort of pre-test of a hypothesis. In order to be more definitive it would require more evidence such as that the men were representative of the population, and considerably larger sample sizes and detailed analysis to reduce confounding. I have never quite understood why Dr. Renaud used this "weak" approach when the controlled experimental method in which he is experienced is so much more powerful. The epidemiological field laboratory methods require entirely different skills than his team has,

Basically, however, the whole direction of his research is outstanding and important.

My basic criticism, then, is that the approach is based on inadequate epidemiological methodology in the presence of available powerful experimental methodology. I would accept his findings, even in their low numbers, and the inadequate indication that the populations were representative, as an important clue which should be followed up by more appropriate epidemiological methods and better, by experimental studies.

Many thanks.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB/pm

Enclosures