**Six Steps to Evaluate a Claim**

*For full instructions on evaluating research claims, please refer to the article located at* [*http://www.theptdc.com/2014/06/analyze-fitness-research/*](http://www.theptdc.com/2014/06/analyze-fitness-research/)

**1. Identify the argument being made and its central claim**

* What do you already know about this topic?
* What is your current belief concerning this topic (your bias)?
* Do you agree or disagree with the central claim *before evaluating the argument*? Why or why not?

**2. Identify what information you would need to observe in order to change your belief (your**

**falsification data)**

* Write this down and refer to it throughout your evaluation – if you encounter this within the argument, even if the central claim was something that you had initially believed, you must consider reassessing your belief.

**3. Analyze the argument carefully**

* What are the facts being used to support the argument and central claim?
* What is the quality of these sources? Are they opinions? Poorly performed research studies? Well-performed research studies?
* What is the level of the evidence provided? Is it showing cause and effect or is it associative/correlational only? Is it a single study or does it reflect well-conducted Systematic Reviews?
* Is the data from these sources validated and known to be true, or is it speculative?

**4. Critically assess the claim relative to the argument being made**

* Does the argument support the claim?
* Does the argument depend on unrealistic, improbable assumptions or generalizations?
* Do the sources support the argument being made, or do they suggest something other than what is being argued?
* Is the overall argument clearly presented and logical?
* Is the overall argument concise and specific, or does it make claims beyond the ability of its evidence to provide?

**5. Consult the body of knowledge on the topic**

* Look up any terms that you were unfamiliar with for further clarity
* Look up any Systematic Reviews or Literature Reviews that might be available on the topic and compare the argument’s claims with this information
* Look up any additional claims or articles referred to in the argument for alternative data or opinions

**6. Re-assess your opinion/bias**

* • Has the article changed your opinion?
* If not, why do you remain skeptical? Is it a justifiable position supported by logic and sound judgment, or is it based on personal beliefs or preferences that cannot be supported otherwise?
* Is the argument strong enough to suggest a change in your personal practice or lifestyle, or is the argument not strong enough to do so? Why or why not?