



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## **Treating Meningioma: does the patient benefit? A paradigm shift from tumor to patient**

Zamanipoor Najafabadi, A.H.

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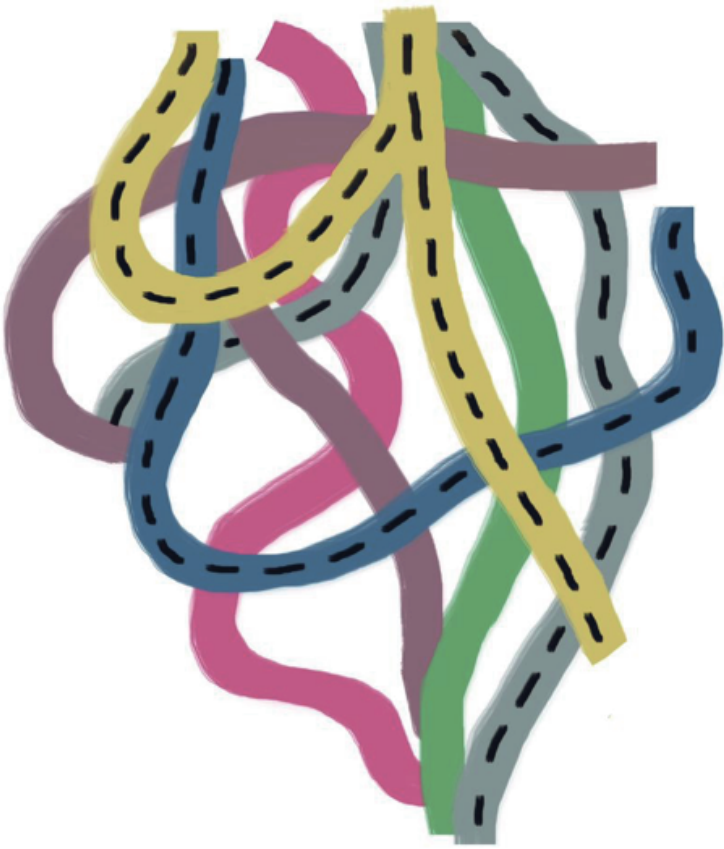
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# Part 2

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**Understanding and predicting outcomes of  
meningioma patients**

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# Chapter 7

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## **TRIPOD statement: a preliminary pre-post analysis of reporting and methods of prediction models**

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Amir H. Zamanipoor Najafabadi

Chava L. Ramspek

Friedo W. Dekker

Pauline Heus

Lotty Hooft

Karel G.M. Moons

Wilco C. Peul

Gary S. Collins

Ewout W. Steyerberg

Merel van Diepen

# ABSTRACT

## Objectives

To assess the difference in completeness of reporting and methodological conduct of published prediction models before and after publication of the Transparent Reporting of a multivariable prediction model for Individual Prognosis Or Diagnosis (TRIPOD) Statement.

## Methods

In the seven general medicine journals with the highest impact factor, we compared the completeness of the reporting and the quality of the methodology of prediction model studies published between 2012 and 2014 (pre-TRIPOD) with studies published between 2016 and 2017 (post-TRIPOD). For articles published in the post-TRIPOD period, we examined whether there was improved reporting for articles (1) citing the TRIPOD Statement, and (2) published in journals that published the TRIPOD Statement.

## Results

A total of 70 articles were included (pre-TRIPOD: 32, post-TRIPOD: 38). No improvement was seen for the overall percentage of reported items after the publication of the TRIPOD Statement (pre-TRIPOD 74%, post-TRIPOD 76%, 95% CI of absolute difference: -4% to 7%). For the individual TRIPOD items, an improvement was seen for 16 (44%) items, while 3 (8%) items showed no improvement and 17 (47%) items showed a deterioration. Post-TRIPOD, there was no improved reporting for articles citing the TRIPOD statement, nor for articles published in journals that published the TRIPOD statement. The methodological quality improved in the post-TRIPOD period. More models were externally validated in the same article (absolute difference 8%, post-TRIPOD: 39%), used measures of calibration (21%, post-TRIPOD: 87%) and discrimination (9%, post-TRIPOD: 100%), and used multiple imputation for handling missing data (13%, post-TRIPOD: 50%).

## Conclusions

Since the publication of the TRIPOD Statement, some reporting and methodological aspects have improved. Prediction models are still often poorly developed and validated and many aspects remain poorly reported, hindering optimal clinical application of these models. Long-term effects of the TRIPOD statement publication should be evaluated in future studies.

## Key words

Diagnostic, Prediction, Prognostic, Reporting, TRIPOD, Methodology.

## **Strengths and limitations of this study**

- This is the first study to assess the completeness of reporting and methodological conduct of prediction models published before and after publication of the TRIPOD statement.
- A limitation of this study is the short time period evaluated and therefore future studies are needed to assess the long-term effects on completeness of reporting and methodological conduct.
- Causality between publication of the TRIPOD statement and the found results cannot be established due to confounding.

# INTRODUCTION

Prediction models cover both prognostic models, which aim to predict the risk of future outcomes, and diagnostic models, which aim to assess the presence or absence of a condition.<sup>1</sup> They provide information for differential diagnosis, additional testing and for patient selection on treatment. Interest in prediction models has sharply increased over the last two decades, translating to new methodological developments, especially regarding performance assessment of these models<sup>2–4</sup>. In addition, clinical guidelines are increasingly recommending the use of prediction models,<sup>5,6</sup> and consequently implementation of these models in clinical practice for individualised diagnostic and therapeutic decisions has surged.<sup>7–10</sup>

Previous systematic reviews on the quality of published prediction models have identified poor reporting and many methodological shortcomings in the development and validation of these models.<sup>11–13</sup> In response to these reviews, the Transparent Reporting of a multivariable prediction model for Individual Prognosis Or Diagnosis (TRIPOD) Statement was developed.<sup>14</sup> The TRIPOD Statement provides reporting recommendations for articles that describe the development and external validation of prediction models, aiming to enhance reporting transparency and hence interpretability, reproducibility, and clinical usability of these models.<sup>14</sup> Although the TRIPOD Statement primarily focuses on reporting and not on methods, current accepted methods for the development and validation of prediction models are discussed in the accompanied Explanation and Elaboration document.<sup>15</sup>

The primary aim of this study was to assess the difference in completeness of reporting and methodological conduct of published prediction models before and after publication in high impact general medicine journals.

## METHODS

### Systematic literature search

We selected the seven general medicine journals with the highest Web of Knowledge impact factor in 2017: *New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)*, *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, *The Lancet*, *the British Medical Journal (The BMJ)*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *PLOS Medicine*, and *BMC Medicine*. Articles on prediction models published in these journals before publication of the TRIPOD Statement (pre-TRIPOD: 01 January 2012 – 31 December 2014) and after publication of TRIPOD statement (post-TRIPOD: 01 January 2016 – 31 December 2017) were identified by a PubMed search string (Supplementary text 1). Articles published in 2015 were excluded from the search, as the TRIPOD Statement was published in 2015 and we regard this as a transition period. Titles and abstracts were screened by one

reviewer (AHZN). Full-text articles were screened by two independent reviewers (AHZN and CLR) and disagreement was resolved by discussion and consensus with a senior author (MvD).

## **Article and model selection**

Original articles with the primary aim of developing and/or validating multivariable models, both prognostic and diagnostic, were included. We excluded etiological studies, genetic marker studies, and model impact studies, as these are not covered by the TRIPOD Statement. Included articles were classified as 1) development, 2) development and external validation, 3) external validation, and 4) extension/updating of models. For articles addressing multiple models but not explicitly recommending a single model, the model with the most predictors was evaluated. For instance, Hippisley-Cox (2013) described model A, B and C for the prediction of future risk of cardiovascular disease, with model B being the same as model A with the addition of several predictors and interactions and model C being the same as model B with the addition of one variable. In this case model C was evaluated.

## **Assessment of adherence to TRIPOD criteria**

In 2018, authors of the TRIPOD Statement published a TRIPOD adherence assessment form and adherence scoring rules, which were also used in our study.<sup>16–18</sup> The TRIPOD Adherence form is a measurement tool developed for authors who want to evaluate the adherence of prediction model studies to TRIPOD, e.g. over time or in a certain medical domain. In general, when multiple aspects were described within a TRIPOD item, all aspects needed to be reported to score a point for that item. For instance, the item title contains four sub-items (e.g. i. identifying the study as development and/or validation of a ii. prediction model with iii. description of target population and iv. outcome) and all four aspects need to be reported to score a point for this specific item. For all items and aspects of the checklist it was assessed whether it was reported in the main article or supplementary materials. The main analyses were based on items reported in either the main text or supplements. Each article was only assessed for items applicable to the study (i.e. development and/or external validation, or incremental value study). Scores for reporting level were calculated by assigning a single point for each reported item applicable to the study and total reporting level scores were converted to percentages based on the maximum possible score, and followed published scoring rules for the TRIPOD Adherence form.<sup>16,17</sup>

## **Assessment of study characteristics and used methods**

In addition to the completeness of reporting following the TRIPOD statement, we assessed specific study characteristics and methods used in the included articles. To this end, we developed a comprehensive data extraction form based on previous studies, current methodological consensus, and the TRIPOD Exploration and Elaboration document (Supplementary text 1).<sup>11,13,15,19–22</sup> In summary the following topics were assessed: general study characteristics (i.e.



diagnostic-prognostic and study topic), handling of missing data, model development methods, type of external validation and updating, and performance measures. To facilitate interpretation of the results section, main recommendations of the TRIPOD Exploration and Elaboration document are presented in Table 1. Assessment of these items was performed by two independent reviewers (AHZN and CLR) and a senior author (MvD) where necessary. In addition, for all articles published in the post-TRIPOD period, we extracted whether authors cited or referred to the TRIPOD Statement, provided the completed checklist, if the article was published in a journal that published the Statement (*The BMJ*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *BMC Medicine*), or was published in a journal that clearly stated in the author guidelines that they required TRIPOD adherence for submitted work at the time of writing this manuscript (*The BMJ*, *JAMA*, and *PLOS Medicine*). While all included journals (except for the *NEJM*) encouraged authors to follow the Equator Network guidelines, which includes the TRIPOD checklist, in their author instructions, only *The BMJ*, *JAMA* and *PLOS Medicine* required adherence to the Equator network guidelines and also required to include a filled-out checklist at the time of submission.

**Table 1: Recommended methods and analyses for the development and validation of prediction models including supportive references**

<b>Methodology</b>		
<b>Handling of missing data</b>	It is generally advised to use multiple imputation for handling of missing data. Complete case analysis, single or mean imputation are inefficient methods to estimate coefficients	47–49
<b>Selection and retaining of predictors in multivariable models</b>	Predictor selection and retaining is preferably based on clinical knowledge and previous literature, instead of significance levels in univariable or stepwise analysis.	22,26,27
<b>Internal validation</b>	It is advised to internally validate the model to assess optimism in performance and reduce over-fitting. An efficient method is bootstrapping; split-sample validation should be avoided.	25,26
<b>Calibration</b>	It is advised to assess the calibration of a model at external validation. The preferred method is a calibration plot, with intercept and slope, and not statistical tests (e.g. Hosmer-Lemeshow), as a plot retains the most information on possible miscalibration.	22,26,27,50
<b>External validation</b>	External validation of models is needed for rigorous assessment of performance. The preferred external validation population is fully independent.	28,51

## Analysis and reporting of results

Reporting levels are presented as percentages, stratified by journal, and for comparison the absolute difference in percentages with 95% confidence intervals are reported. Analyses were performed with IBM SPSS statistics (version 23.0, Armonk, NY, USA). Main results of the completeness of both reporting and methods are reported in text and detailed results are reported in the (Supplementary) Tables. Comparisons were made between articles I) Pre- and Post-TRIPOD, II) post-TRIPOD between articles published in journals that published and did not publish the TRIPOD, III) between articles published in journals that require TRIPOD

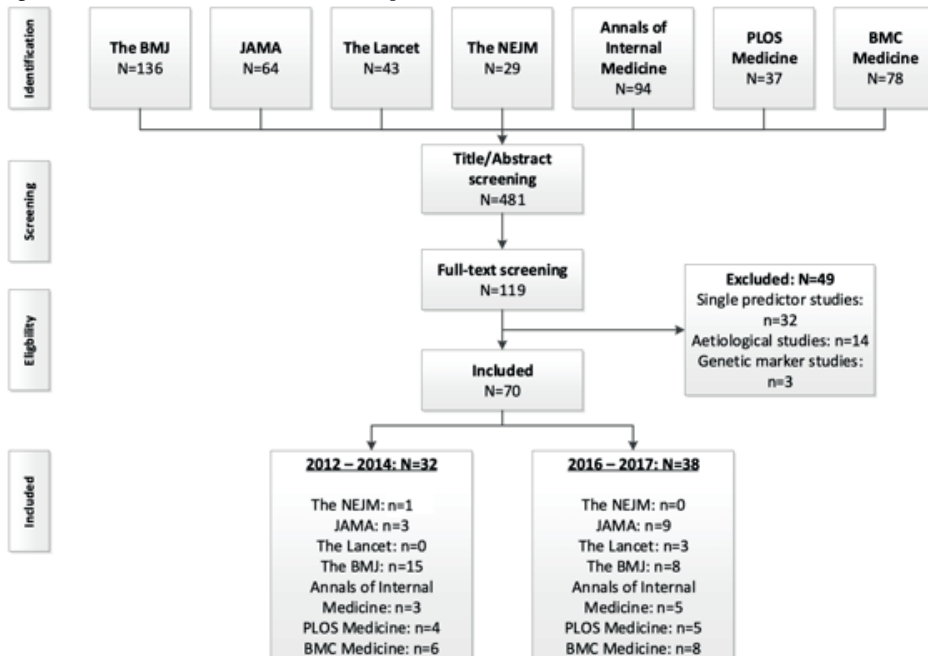
adherence or not, IV) citing vs. not citing the TRIPOD, and V) providing vs. not providing a completed TRIPOD checklist. Furthermore, to estimate changes over time regardless of the TRIPOD statement, a comparison was made between pre-TRIPOD articles and post-TRIPOD articles not citing the TRIPOD.

## RESULTS

### Characteristics of included studies

The PubMed search string retrieved 481 articles, of which the full-text of 119 were read and 70 met our inclusion criteria (pre-TRIPOD: 32 articles, post-TRIPOD: 38 articles, Figure 1, Supplementary Text 1). Most of the included articles were published in *The BMJ* (n=38), and least in *The Lancet* (n=3) and *NEJM* (n=1). In both the pre- and post-TRIPOD period the majority of articles described prognostic models (as opposed to diagnostic models) and this increased in the post-TRIPOD period (pre-TRIPOD: 59%, post-TRIPOD: 89%) (Table 2). In the post-TRIPOD period the percentage of articles describing both the development and validation of a model (pre-TRIPOD: 31%, post-TRIPOD: 39%) or solely the external validation (pre-TRIPOD: 13%, post-TRIPOD: 26%) increased too. Thirty-two percent of articles only described the development of a prediction model without external validation in the post-TRIPOD period, compared to 44% in the pre-TRIPOD period.

Figure 1: Flow chart of search results and selection procedure



**Table 2: Characteristics of included studies**

	<b>Before 2015 (n=32) number, (%)</b>	<b>After 2015 (n=38) number, (%)</b>
<b>Diagnostic/Prognostic</b>		
Diagnostic	13 (41%)	4 (11%)
Prognostic	19 (59%)	34 (89%)
<b>Type</b>		
Development	14 (44%)	12 (32%)
Validation	4 (13%)	10 (26%)
Development and Validation	10 (31%)	15 (39%)
Update	4 (13%)	1 (3%)
<b>Setting</b>		
General population and Primary care	18 (56%)	18 (47%)
Secondary care	14 (44%)	20 (53%)
<b>Design</b>		
Cohort	26 (81%)	31 (82%)
RCT	1 (30%)	4 (11%)
Cohort and RCT	2 (6%)	3 (8%)
Case-Control	3 (9%)	0 (0%)
<b>Topic</b>		
(Cardio)vascular	12 (38%)	16 (42%)
Oncological	3 (9%)	8 (21%)
Other	17 (53%)	14 (37%)

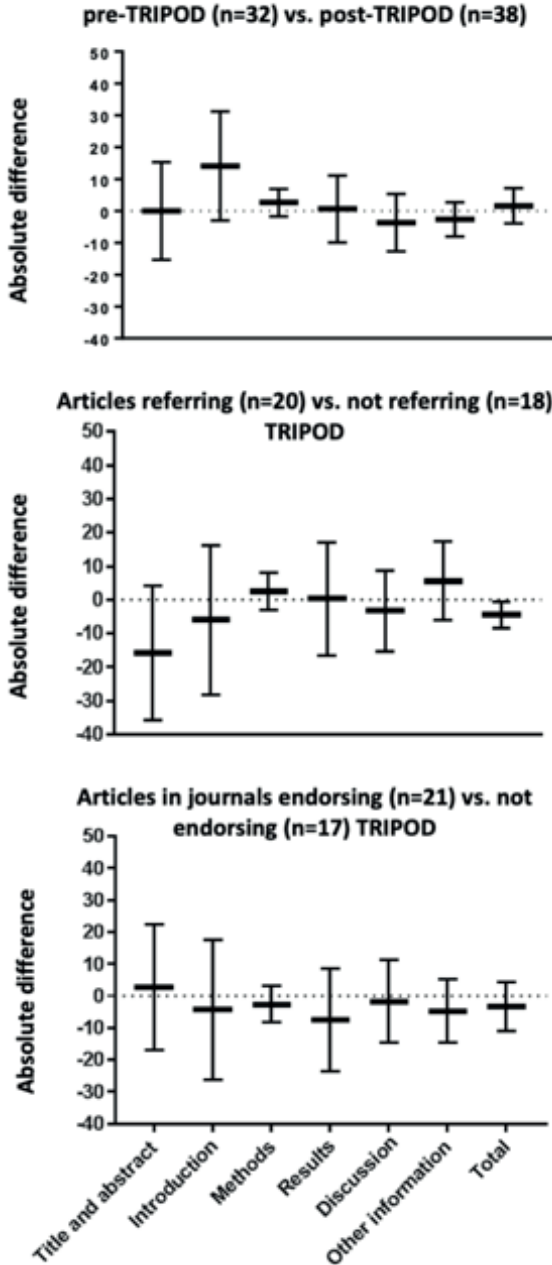
The majority of models were developed and/or validated using data from observational cohorts (pre-TRIPOD: 81%, post-TRIPOD: 82%) compared to other study designs such as randomised trials. More than half of the articles published in the post-TRIPOD period referred to the TRIPOD Statement (n=20, 53%) and were published in journals that published the TRIPOD Statement (n=21, 55%). The TRIPOD Statement was cited in 48% of articles published in journals that published the TRIPOD, and in 59% of articles in journals that did not publish TRIPOD.

### **Assessment of adherence to TRIPOD statement**

Using the 2018 TRIPOD Adherence assessment form, a minimal non-significant increase in the overall percentage of reported items was found comparing the pre-TRIPOD period (74%) with the post-TRIPOD period (76%, absolute difference 2%, 95% CI: -4% to 7%, Figure 2, Supplementary Table 1), with no clear trend over the years (Supplementary Figure 1). Results were similar for the comparison between pre-TRIPOD articles and post-TRIPOD articles not citing the statement (76%, absolute difference 2%, 95%CI: -5% to 9%). An improvement

Figure 2: TRIPOD reporting scores

## 2018 TRIPOD adherence data extraction checklist



for 16 of the individual TRIPOD items (44% of items, Supplementary Table 2) was seen, while 3 (8%) of items showed no improvement and 17 (47%) items showed a decrease in the percentage of articles appropriately reporting the item. Post-TRIPOD, for articles referring vs. not referring to the statement, published in journals that published vs. did not publish the statement, and published in journals that required adherence to the statement vs. did not require adherence to the statement, no difference in the completeness of reporting was observed (Supplementary Tables 3-5). Five articles presented the completed TRIPOD checklist in the supplementary material and the overall percentage of reporting for these articles was 80%. The percentage of articles reporting TRIPOD items in their supplement is presented in Supplementary Table 6.

## **Assessment of specific TRIPOD items**

### ***Abstract***

In both the pre-TRIPOD (16%) and post-TRIPOD period (8%), most abstracts did not report all the proposed sub-items (TRIPOD item 2).

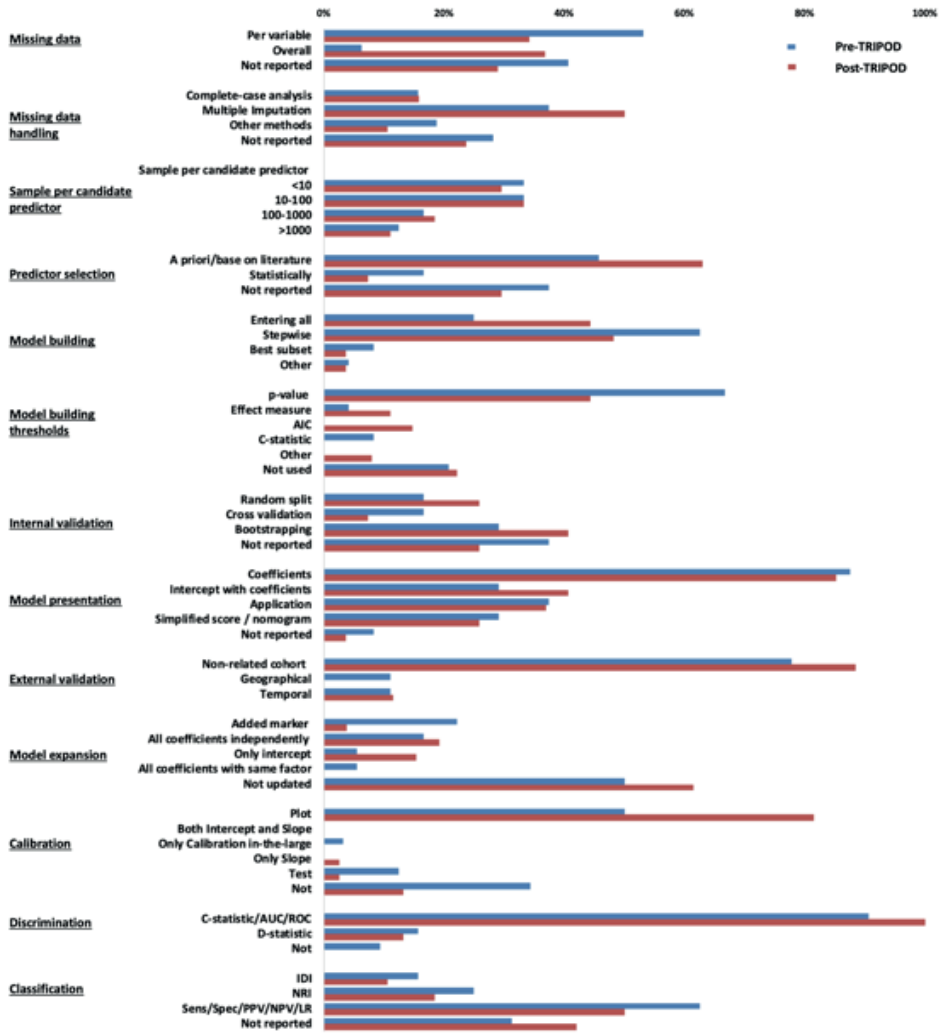
### ***Reporting of missing data***

In general, the reporting of missing data (TRIPOD item 13b) improved from 59% in the pre-TRIPOD period to 71% in the post-TRIPOD period, though fewer studies reported missingness per predictor in the post-TRIPOD period (pre-TRIPOD: 53%, post-TRIPOD: 37%, Figure 3 and Supplementary Table 7). Most studies did not report the reason for missing data (pre-TRIPOD: 84%, post-TRIPOD: 95%).

### ***Model development and presentation***

In the post-TRIPOD period, proper description of the characteristics of study participants (TRIPOD item 13b) was less often reported (37%) than in the pre-TRIPOD period (50%). In the post-TRIPOD period, method of predictor selection (TRIPOD-item 10b) was more often reported (70%) than in the pre-TRIPOD period (62%), as was internal validation (TRIPOD-item 10b) of the developed model (pre-TRIPOD 62%, post-TRIPOD 74%). If performed, unadjusted analyses were less often reported (TRIPOD item 14b) in the post-TRIPOD period (64%) than in the pre-TRIPOD period (86%). In the post-TRIPOD period, the full model (i.e. intercept or baseline hazard and all regression coefficients: TRIPOD-item 15a) was presented more frequently (41%), compared with the pre-TRIPOD period (29%). However, in both eras some studies still reported no information at all on the final model (pre-TRIPOD 8%; post-TRIPOD 4%, Figure 3 and Supplementary Table 8). To improve clinical usability (TRIPOD-item 15b), more than one third of studies reported to have developed a web application (pre-TRIPOD: 38%, post-TRIPOD: 37%) and some studies provided a simplified clinical risk score or nomogram (pre-TRIPOD: 29%; post-TRIPOD: 26%).

Figure 3: Comparison of used methods in the pre-TRIPOD and post-TRIPOD period



### Performance measures

The percentage of studies reporting calibration (TRIPOD-item 16) of the model increased from 66% in the pre-TRIPOD period to 87% in the post-TRIPOD period. Discrimination (TRIPOD-item 16), was reported by all studies in the post-TRIPOD period and by 91% of studies in the pre-TRIPOD period. Measures of classification were reported less frequently in the post-TRIPOD period (pre-TRIPOD: 69%, post-TRIPOD: 58%). Measures of clinical usefulness like decision curve analysis were only reported by 2 (6%) studies in the pre-TRIPOD period and 7 (21%) studies in the post-TRIPOD period. Measures of overall performance like

the Brier score or  $R^2$  were infrequently reported in both periods (pre-TRIPOD: 19%, post-TRIPOD: 21%). Detailed results are depicted in Supplementary Table 7.

## **Assessment of methods**

### ***Handling of missing data***

Multiple imputation was the most frequently performed approach for handling missing data (pre-TRIPOD: 38%, post-TRIPOD: 50%). The number of studies that used a complete case analysis remained constant and was 16% in both the pre- and post-TRIPOD period.

### ***Model development***

Post-TRIPOD, the number of studies that included predictors based on significance levels in univariable analysis decreased (pre-TRIPOD: 67%, post-TRIPOD: 44%, Figure 2 and Supplementary Table 8) as well as the number of studies using stepwise methods to retain predictors (pre-TRIPOD: 63%, post-TRIPOD: 48%). In general, a larger number of candidate predictors was used in the post-TRIPOD period (median: 25), compared with pre-TRIPOD period (median: 20). Internal validation was more frequently performed in the post-TRIPOD period (74%) compared with the pre-TRIPOD period (62%). When internal validation was performed, bootstrapping was the most frequently used method in both time periods with an increase from 29% in the pre-TRIPOD period to 41% in the post-TRIPOD period.

### ***Performance measures***

The majority of studies presented measures of calibration (pre-TRIPOD: 66%, post-TRIPOD: 87%) and discrimination (pre-TRIPOD: 91%, post-TRIPOD: 100%, Figure 3 and Supplementary Table 7). A calibration plot and this increased in the post-TRIPOD period (pre-TRIPOD: 50%, post-TRIPOD: 82%). Discrimination was primarily assessed with the C-statistic and Area Under the Curve (AUC) methods (pre-TRIPOD: 91%, post-TRIPOD: 100%). Measures of classification were reported in more than half of the studies (pre-TRIPOD: 69%, post-TRIPOD: 58%), mostly assessed with diagnostic test summary statistics (i.e. sensitivity, specificity and positive and negative predictive values) (pre-TRIPOD: 63%, post-TRIPOD: 50%) and to a lesser extent the integrated discrimination improvement (IDI; pre-TRIPOD: 16%, post-TRIPOD: 11%) or the net reclassification improvement (NRI; pre-TRIPOD 25%, post-TRIPOD: 18%).

### ***External validation and model updating***

Most external validation studies performed the validation in individuals fully unrelated to the development cohort (pre-TRIPOD 78%, post-TRIPOD: 88%, Figure 3 and Supplementary Table 9). Models were updated with an additional predictor in 4 (13%) studies before the TRIPOD statement and in 1 (3%) study after the TRIPOD statement.

## DISCUSSION

No significant improvement in the overall reporting quality of prediction models published in the seven general medicine journals with the highest impact factor was found in the post-TRIPOD period, according to the TRIPOD Adherence form. However, an improvement in general methodological conduct was found. Notably, more studies described external validation of a model, reported information on missing data, used multiple imputation methods instead of complete case analysis for handling of missing data, selected and maintained variables in multivariable models based on clinical relevance instead of statistical cut-offs, and assessed both discrimination and calibration measures. While improvement was found for almost half of the TRIPOD items, no improvement or a deterioration was found for the other half of the items.

### Recommendations on reporting and methods

Though improvements over time in specific aspects of reporting and methods were apparent, there is room for further progress. While an increase in studies reporting the percentage of missing data in the post-TRIPOD period was observed, the amount of missingness was often not reported per predictor, yet this is important for the assessment of clinical usability of the model.<sup>15</sup> Multiple imputation was the most frequently performed method for handling missing data, which generally is the preferred approach.<sup>[23]</sup> Reporting of all coefficients of the final multivariable model and intercept, which is necessary for external validation and clinical use of models, increased over time.<sup>22</sup> Although widely discouraged, a number of studies in both the pre-TRIPOD and post-TRIPOD period included predictors in multivariable prediction models based on data-driven selection methods such as univariable significance and/or stepwise methods. Such methods increase the risk of overfitted and poorly calibrated models.<sup>11,22–26</sup> Instead, it is advised to select predictors based on clinical knowledge and previous literature.<sup>27</sup> While the percentage of studies that both developed and externally validated a model increased over time, still more than 30% of articles only described the development of a model. External validation in a fully independent cohort is strongly recommended, as model performance might significantly decrease in cohorts other than the development cohort.<sup>28</sup> Assessment of both calibration and discrimination also increased, which is necessary in order to judge a model's predictive accuracy. Calibration refers to the agreement between absolute predicted and observed outcomes and the majority of studies used the preferred calibration plot.<sup>29</sup> Discrimination, a relative measure on the ability to distinguish between patients with and without the outcome, was reported by almost all studies.<sup>29</sup>

### Comparison with other reporting guidelines

A large number of reporting guidelines have been published for various study types.<sup>19,30–33</sup> Mixed results on the effect of these guidelines on the completeness of reporting have been found.<sup>34–38</sup> While an overall modest improvement in reporting was described for randomised



controlled trials after publication of the CONSORT statement and by the STARD statement for diagnostic studies, no clear improvement was described for observational studies by the STROBE statement and prognostic marker studies by the REMARK guideline as described by the authors of these studies.<sup>34-38</sup> These findings pose the question how the introduction and publication of these guidelines can optimally impact the research field. For both the CONSORT and STARD statement, journals endorsing the statement showed a higher level of reporting compared with journals not endorsing these statements. Nevertheless, this was not found for the REMARK guideline, nor in our study for the TRIPOD statement.<sup>34,37,38</sup> Evidence of a relation between citing the statement and reporting level is also limited, as no association between this was found for the STARD nor in our study.<sup>[38]</sup> Requiring authors to provide and publish the completed checklist might help to improve reporting levels, as we found that the small numbers of studies providing the checklist reported more items on average. Therefore, we do not only recommend journals to ask authors to submit the completed checklist upon submission, but also require authors to publish it as a supplement, and reviewers and editors to control the provided checklist. However, as endorsing, citing and providing the checklist seems to have only a small effect on the reporting quality, we believe it is even more important to train methodologists and clinicians to interpret and use the checklist. This is supported by the results that even studies that provided the completed checklist, still did not report all items of the TRIPOD statement in analysis of reporting. Documents such as the TRIPOD Exploration and Elaboration document facilitate proper interpretation, but we believe that the threshold to use this detailed document might be too high for the unexperienced researcher. Other possibilities to familiarize authors with the checklist should be explored, such as collaborative efforts of educational institutions and the TRIPOD committee to train researchers and clinicians. Online training courses might be of added value to reach a large target group.

## **Comparison with other reviews on the completeness of reporting and methodological conduct of prediction models**

Previous studies, published between 2012 and 2014, concluded poor reporting and use of methods for prediction models.<sup>11,13,20,21</sup> Comparing our results with a study assessing reporting and methods of prediction studies published in 6 high impact general medicine journals in 2008, improvement since then is clear for both methods and reporting. Considering methods more studies are externally validated, compose calibration plots to assess calibration and use multiple imputation for handling missing data. Improvement in reporting is also apparent as more studies report calibration and discrimination measures. Furthermore, a recently published article assessed the reporting quality of prediction models published in 37 clinical domains in 2014 using the 2018 TRIPOD Adherence assessment form, which found similar results to our Pre-TRIPOD results.<sup>17</sup> As we only included articles published in high impact general medicine journals it is difficult to generalize these results to the entire medical academic research field. We could argue that the improvement we observed might be an overestimation

if general medical journals adopted the TRIPOD guidelines and new methodological insights with more speed and rigour. However, the opposite might also be true as these high impact general medicine journals already had high methodological standards before the TRIPOD statement publication.<sup>11,13,16,21,35,36,39,40</sup>

## Strengths and Limitations

A limitation of the current study is that the evaluation of studies was limited to the first two years after the TRIPOD statement publication. It may take some years before a reporting guideline is widely disseminated and accepted and the full impact is measurable. However, to somewhat overcome this problem we did not include any articles published in 2015, as the TRIPOD statement was published in January 2015 and we therefore saw this as a transition period. In addition, a previously published study on the effect of STARD found significant improvement within two years after publication.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore it is not possible to causally attribute the reported changes to the TRIPOD statement, as the results might be confounded by other developments in the last decade, such as publication of multiple series on the conduct of prediction models, publication of other guidelines such as the REMARK guideline for tumor marker prognostic studies, and a general increase in the numbers of published prediction models.<sup>41-43</sup> One may also expect that authors who work in the field of prediction models are aware of the publication of the TRIPOD statement, especially those who publish in high impact general medicine journals. A strength of the study is that the actual used methods for the development, description, validation and updating of prediction models were also assessed. While reporting and used methods are inherently related, the focus is different. A poorly developed model may be described fully and transparently in a manuscript and score high on reporting quality and vice versa a well-developed model may have poor reporting.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, we have facilitated comparison to future TRIPOD reviews by using the 2018 TRIPOD Adherence assessment form. Although both reporting and methods were comprehensively assessed, we might have missed interesting items for evaluation, especially as the field of prediction models is continuously developing. We also did not assess the risk of bias of the included studies with the PROBAST risk of bias assessment tool, as it would be not feasible to score the included articles according to the PROBAST, since to do so subject-specific knowledge is required and the included studies span a wide range of clinical subjects. Furthermore, as the PROBAST only gives suggestions for signalling questions and no scoring rules, it does not completely fit with the aim to assess the actual used methods of the included studies. Furthermore, it would have been of interest to compare articles published in journals that between January 2016 and December 2017 obligated authors to complete the TRIPOD checklist, however this information was not available.

## Unanswered questions and future research

Future studies should focus on the long-term effects of the TRIPOD statement publication on reporting quality and methods, using the 2018 TRIPOD Adherence form to allow for comparisons over time using the same adherence assessment tool. In addition, effects of the statement should be assessed in different medical fields for which a pre-TRIPOD baseline measurement is already performed.<sup>16</sup> Earlier studies on the effect of other reporting guidelines showed that the effect of these guidelines may be smaller or larger in specific medical fields.<sup>34,40</sup>

A new emerging field is the development of prediction models using artificial intelligence, machine learning and deep learning methods. In addition, more often omics data is used as predictors for these models.<sup>44</sup> While these models have many similarities with traditional regression methods, they differ in some aspects and may require specific guidelines on reporting.<sup>44,45</sup> Accordingly, the TRIPOD-AI tool has recently been announced and is underway.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, reporting guidelines for prediction model impact studies are missing.

With the increasing number of reporting guidelines and lack of clear evidence that all guidelines improve reporting quality, research should be conducted to find methods to optimise the form, use and impact of these guidelines. With this in mind, there should also be focus on the overlap between different reporting guidelines. Prediction models can be reported following the TRIPOD statement, the STARD statement for diagnostic test accuracy studies, and REMARK for prognostic tumor marker studies. As an increasing amount of studies contain multiple goals, analyses and data sources, it may be difficult to adhere to all applicable and relevant guidelines within the maximum word count. This holds especially for the abstract section of articles.

## Conclusion

No improvement was found comparing the post-TRIPOD period with the pre-TRIPOD period in the overall reporting quality of prediction models published in the seven general medicine journals with the highest impact factor. Comparison of articles published before the TRIPOD statement with non-TRIPOD citing articles published after the TRIPOD statement, yielded similar results as the main pre-post comparison, further suggesting a lack of direct impact of the TRIPOD statement on overall reporting levels. However improvement was found in various specific aspects methodological conduct. More studies described external model validations, reported information on missing data, used multiple imputation methods for handling of missing data, reported the full prediction model and reported information on performance measures. However, there is still room for improvement in both the reporting and used methods of these models, as prediction models are still erroneously developed and validated and many aspects remain poorly reported, hindering optimal use of these models in clinical decision making. Long-term effects of the TRIPOD statement publication should be

evaluated in future studies, ideally using the same 2018 TRIPOD Adherence assessment form to allow for comparisons over time.

### **Contributorship:**

AHZN conceived the study. AHZN, MvD, CLR, and EWS developed the study design with input from FWD, PH, LH, KGMM, WCP, GSC. AHZN and CLR screened the literature and performed the data-extraction. AHZN performed the statistical analysis and wrote the first and successive drafts of the manuscript. AHZN, CLR, FWD, PH, LH, KGMM, WCP, GSC, EWS, MvD interpreted the data, critically revised the manuscript for important intellectual content, and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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### **Competing interests:**

GSC, KGMM, and EWS are members of the TRIPOD group. All authors have completed the ICMJE uniform disclosure form at [http://www.icmje.org/coi\\_disclosure.pdf](http://www.icmje.org/coi_disclosure.pdf) (available on request from the corresponding author) and declare no other support from any organisation for the submitted work than the grants reported in the funding section; no financial relationships with any organisations that might have an interest in the submitted work in the previous three years, no other relationships or activities that could appear to have influenced the submitted work.

### **Ethical approval:**

Not required

### **Data sharing:**

All datasets that were used are retrievable following the instruction of the original papers.

### **Transparency:**

The lead author (AHZN) affirms that this manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study being reported; that no important aspects of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained.

**Patient and Public Involvement:**

It was not appropriate or possible to involve patients or the public in the design, or conduct, or reporting, or dissemination plans of our research.

**Dissemination declaration:**

Not applicable.

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# SUPPLEMENTS

Supplementary Table 1: TRIPOD reporting scores for all included articles

	Before % n=32	After % n=38	Absolute difference of percentages (95% CI)
Title and abstract	25	25	0 (-15 to 15)
Introduction	69	83	14 (-3 to 31)
Methods	80	83	3 (-2 to 7)
Results	66	67	1 (-10 to 11)
Discussion	89	85	-4 (-13 to 5)
Other information	100	97	-3 (-8 to 3)
Total	74	76	2 (-4 to 7)

Supplementary Table 2: TRIPOD reporting scores for individual TRIPOD items

TRIPOD item	pre-TRIPOD %	post-TRIPOD %	TRIPOD item	pre-TRIPOD %	post-TRIPOD %
1	34	42	10d	69	71
2	16	8	10e	56	50
3a	78	84	11	96	95
3b	59	82	12	75	71
4a	97	100	13a	94	95
4b	91	95	13b	50	37
5a	97	95	13c	53	65
5b	97	97	14a	100	97
5c	100	60	14b	86	64
6a	97	97	15a	27	42
6b	97	95	15b	65	61
7a	88	87	16	66	68
7b	94	100	17	40	73
8	100	100	18	94	97
9	28	24	19a	82	75
10a	63	84	19b	100	95
10b	19	39	20	75	68
10c	67	100	22	100	97

**Supplementary Table 3: TRIPOD reporting scores for articles published after TRIPOD statement referring vs not referring to the statement**

	TRIPOD not referred % n=18	TRIPOD referred % n=20	Absolute difference of percentages (95% CI)
Title and abstract	33	18	-16 (-36 to 4)
Introduction	86	80	-6 (-28 to 16)
Methods	82	84	2 (-3 to 8)
Results	67	67	0 (-17 to 17)
Discussion	87	83	-3 (-15 to 9)
Other information	94	100	6 (-6 to 17)
Total	76	76	-1 (-8 to 7)

**Supplementary Table 4: TRIPOD reporting scores for articles published after TRIPOD statement in journals that published and did not publish the TRIPOD statement**

	TRIPOD not endorsed % n=17	TRIPOD endorsed % n=21	Absolute difference of percentages (95% CI)
Title and abstract	24	26	3 (-17 to 22)
Introduction	85	81	-4 (-26 to 18)
Methods	84	82	-3 (-8 to 3)
Results	71	63	-7 (-24 to 9)
Discussion	86	84	-2 (-15 to 11)
Other information	100	95	-5 (-15 to 5)
Total	78	75	-3 (-11 to 4)

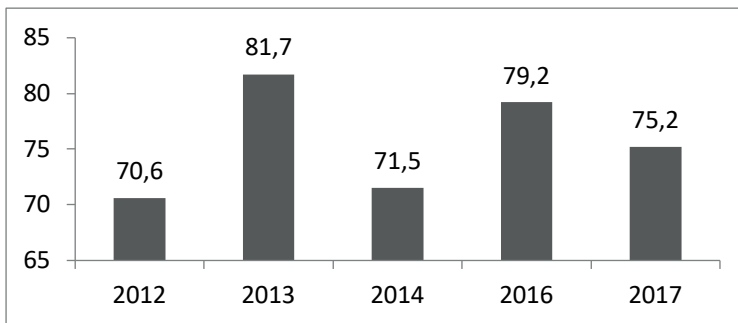
**Supplementary Table 5: TRIPOD reporting scores for articles published after TRIPOD statement in journals that require adherence to the TRIPOD statement and journals that do not require to the adherence statement**

	TRIPOD not required % n=16	TRIPOD required % n=22	Absolute difference of percentages (95% CI)
Title and abstract	25	25	0 (-21 to 21)
Introduction	81	84	3 (-20 to 26)
Methods	83	83	0 (-6 to 6)
Results	66	67	1 (-16 to 19)
Discussion	90	81	-8 (-20 to 3)
Other information	100	95	-5 (-15 to 5)
Total	76	76	0 (-8 to 9)

**Supplementary Table 6: Percentage articles reporting TRIPOD items in supplementary material**

TRIPOD item	Supplement %	TRIPOD item	Supplement %
1	0	10d	1
2	0	10e	0
3a	0	11	4
3b	0	12	24
4a	7	13a	21
4b	7	13b	30
5a	10	3c	17
5b	6	14a	2
5c	33	14b	40
6a	13	15a	40
6b	0	15b	35
7a	36	16	0
7b	0	17	17
8	3	18	0
9	9	19a	0
10a	12	19b	0
10b	13	20	0
10c	14	22	1

**Supplementary figure 1: Average overall TRIPOD reporting levels in percentage per year**



**Supplementary Table 7: Performance measures and missing data in all studies**

	<b>Before 2015 (n=32) Number (%)</b>	<b>After 2016 (n=38) Number (%)</b>
<b>Calibration</b>		
Plot	16 (50%)	31 (82%)
Intercept and Slope	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Calibration in-the-large	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Slope	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Test	4 (13%)	1 (3%)
Not	11 (34%)	5 (13%)
<b>Discrimination</b>		
C-statistic / AUC	29 (91%)	38 (100%)
D-statistic	5 (16%)	5 (13%)
Not	3 (9%)	0 (0%)
<b>Classification</b>		
IDI	5 (16%)	4 (11%)
NRI	8 (25%)	7 (18%)
Sens. Spec. PPV. NPV. LR. ROC	20 (63%)	19 (50%)
Not reported	10 (31%)	16 (42%)
<b>Clinical usefulness</b>		
Decision curve analysis	2 (6%)	8 (21%)
Not reported	30 (94%)	30 (79%)
<b>Overall performance</b>		
Brier	2 (6%)	3 (8%)
R2	4 (13%)	5 (13%)
Adequacy statistic	1 (3%)	2 (5%)
Not reported	26 (81%)	28 (74%)
<b>Missing data reporting</b>		
Per variable	17 (53%)	13 (34%)
Overall	2 (6%)	14 (37%)
Not reported	13 (41%)	11 (29%)
<b>Type and reason of missing data</b>		
Type reported	3 (9%)	2 (5%)
Reason reported	5 (16%)	2 (5%)
<b>Missing data handling</b>		
Complete-case analysis	5 (16%)	6 (16%)
Multiple Imputation	12 (38%)	19 (50%)
Other methods	6 (19%)	4 (11%)
Not reported	9 (28%)	9 (24%)

Supplementary Table 8: Model development and presentation

	Before 2015 (n=24) Number (%)	After 2016 (n=27) Number (%)
<b>Sample per candidate predictor</b>		
<10	8 (33%)	8 (30%)
10-100	8 (33%)	9 (33%)
100-1000	8 (17%)	5 (19%)
>1000	3 (13%)	3 (11%)
Unknown number of predictors	0 (0%)	1 (4%)
Unknown number of outcomes	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
<b>Model Type</b>		
Linear	1 (4%)	0 (0%)
Logistic	16 (67%)	15 (56%)
Cox	6 (25%)	10 (37%)
Points	0 (0%)	2 (7%)
Other	1 (4%)	0 (0%)
<b>Predictor Selection</b>		
A priori knowledge / based on literature	11 (46%)	17 (63%)
Statistically	4 (17%)	2 (7%)
Not reported	9 (38%)	8 (30%)
<b>Model building</b>		
Entering all	6 (25%)	12 (44%)
Stepwise	15 (63%)	13 (48%)
Best subset	2 (8%)	1 (4%)
Other	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
<b>Model building thresholds</b>		
p-value	16 (67%)	12 (44%)
Effect measure	1 (4%)	3 (11%)
R	0 (0%)	1 (4%)
Manually	0 (0%)	1 (4%)
AIC	0 (0%)	4 (15%)
C-statistic	2 (8%)	0 (0%)
Other	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Not used	5 (21%)	6 (22%)
<b>Internal validation</b>		
Random split	4 (17%)	7 (26%)
Cross validation	4 (17%)	2 (7%)
Bootstrapping	7 (29%)	11 (41%)
Not reported	9 (38%)	7 (26%)
<b>Model presentation</b>		
Coefficients	21 (88%)	23 (85%)
Intercept with coefficients	7 (29%)	11 (41%)
Application	9 (38%)	10 (37%)
Simplified score / nomogram	7 (29%)	7 (26%)
Not reported	2 (8%)	1 (4%)

**Supplementary Table 9: External validation and updating**

	<b>Before 2015 (n=18) Number (%)</b>	<b>After 2016 (n=26) Number (%)</b>
<b>External validation</b>		
Fully independent	14 (78%)	23 (88%)
Geographical	2 (11%)	0 (0%)
Temporal	2 (11%)	3 (12%)
<b>Model updating</b>		
Added marker	4 (22%)	1 (4%)
All coefficients independently	3 (17%)	5 (19%)
Only intercept	1 (6%)	4 (15%)
All coefficients with same factor	1 (6%)	0 (0%)
Not updated	9 (50%)	16 (62%)

**Supplementary text 1: Protocol**

**Article selection**

**Search strategy:**

("The New England journal of medicine"[Journal] OR "Lancet (London, England)"[Journal] OR "BMJ (Clinical research ed.)"[Journal] OR "JAMA"[Journal] OR "PLOS Medicine"[Journal] OR "Annals of Internal Medicine" [Journal] OR "BMC Medicine"[Journal]) AND (predict\*[ti] OR prognost\*[ti] OR diagnostic\*[ti] OR "risk score"[ti]) NOT ("Animals"[mesh] NOT "Humans"[mesh]) NOT (("case reports"[ptyp] OR "case report"[ti]) NOT ("Review"[ptyp] OR "clinical study"[ptyp] OR "case series"[tw]))

**Articles included**

- 1 Abbasi A, Peelen LM, Corpeleijn E, *et al.* Prediction models for risk of developing type 2 diabetes: Systematic literature search and independent external validation study. *BMJ* 2012;**345**:1–16. doi:10.1136/bmj.e5900
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- 6 D.S. L, A. S, P.C. A, *et al.* Prediction of heart failure mortality in emergent care: A cohort study. *Ann Intern Med* 2012;**156**:767–75. doi:10.7326/0003-4819-156-11-201206050-00003
- 7 Dagan N, Cohen-Stavi C, Leventer-Roberts M, *et al.* External validation and comparison of three prediction tools for risk of osteoporotic fractures using data from population based electronic health records: Retrospective cohort study. *BMJ* 2017;**356**. doi:10.1136/bmj.i6755
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- 10 Terfe. Glycated hemoglobin measurement and prediction of cardiovascular disease. *JAMA - J Am Med Assoc* 2014;**311**:1225–33. doi:10.1001/jama.2014.1873
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### Assessment of study characteristics, used methods and specific reporting items

3 Background and Objectives	
3a: Type of predictive study	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prognostic</li><li>2. Diagnostic</li></ol>
3a: Topic Study	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. (Cardio)vascular</li><li>2. Oncological</li><li>3. Surgical</li><li>4. Other</li></ol>
3b: Model development and validation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Development</li><li>2. Validation</li><li>3. Development and Validation</li><li>4. Updating</li></ol>
4 Source of Data	
4a: Study design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. RCT</li><li>2. Prospective cohort</li><li>3. Retrospective cohort</li><li>4. Nested case-control</li><li>5. Non-nested case-control</li></ol>
5 Participants	
5a: Study Setting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. General population</li><li>2. Primary care</li><li>3. Secondary care</li></ol>
6 Outcome	
6a: Definition outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is the outcome?</li><li>2. What is the time frame?</li></ol>
6a: Type of outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Dichotomous,</li><li>2. Continuous</li><li>3. Ordinal</li><li>4. Nominal</li><li>5. Time to event</li></ol>
9 Missing Data	
9 Type	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. MAR</li><li>2. MCAR</li><li>3. MNAR</li></ol>
9 Reason	Reason missing data
9 Handling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complete-case analysis</li><li>2. Single imputation</li><li>3. Multiple imputation</li><li>4. Missing indicator method</li><li>5. Last observation carried forward</li><li>6. Mean imputation</li><li>7. Other</li></ol>

10 Statistical Analysis and Methods	
10a: Analysis of predictors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Categorical</li> <li>2. Linear: kept linear</li> <li>3. Linear: dichotomized</li> <li>4. Linear: categorized</li> <li>5. Linear: polynomial transformation</li> <li>6. Linear: spline transformation,</li> <li>7. Linear: interaction</li> <li>8. Linear: log-transformation</li> <li>9. Other</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)
10b: Type of Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Linear</li> <li>2. Logistic</li> <li>3. Ordinal</li> <li>4. Nominal</li> <li>5. Survival</li> <li>6. Poisson</li> <li>7. Points</li> <li>8. Other</li> </ol>
10b: Selection Predictors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A priori knowledge</li> <li>2. Based on the literature</li> <li>3. Statistically</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)
10b: Model building procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Entering all predictors</li> <li>2. Forward selection</li> <li>3. Backward selection</li> <li>4. Best subset</li> </ol>
10b: Statistical thresholds for model building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. p-value: threshold</li> <li>2. AIC/BIC</li> <li>3. <math>R^2</math></li> <li>4. C-statistic/AUC</li> <li>5. HR</li> <li>6. Manually</li> </ol>
10b: Internal Validation methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apparent</li> <li>2. Random split</li> <li>3. Cross-validation</li> <li>4. Bootstrapping</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)
10d: External Validation methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Temporal validation</li> <li>2. Geographical validation</li> <li>3. Fully independent</li> <li>4. Other</li> </ol> (Multiple options possible)
10d: Performance Calibration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Test</li> <li>2. Slope</li> <li>3. Intercept and slope</li> <li>4. Calibration in-the-large</li> <li>5. Plot</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)

10d: Performance Discrimination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. C-statistic / AUC after Development</li> <li>2. C-statistic / AUC after Internal validation</li> <li>3. C-statistic / AUC after external validation</li> <li>4. D-statistic</li> </ol>
10d: Performance Classification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sensitivity / Specificity</li> <li>2. Positive Predictive Value / Negative Predictive Value</li> <li>3. Likelihood ratio</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)
10d: Performance Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IDI</li> <li>2. NRI</li> <li>3. Decision curve analysis</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)
10d: Performance Overall	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brier</li> <li>2. <math>R^2</math></li> </ol>
10e: Model Updating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intercept</li> <li>2. all coefficients changed with same factor</li> <li>3. Re-estimation all coefficients independently</li> <li>4. 2+ selection of additional predictors</li> <li>5. 3+ Reestimation all coefficients</li> </ol>
<hr/>	
13 Participants	
13a: Number of Participants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of participants with and without outcome</li> </ol>
13b: Missing Values	Reported for <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any value</li> <li>2. Per predictor</li> <li>3. For predictors in general</li> <li>4. For outcome</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)
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15 Model Specification	
15a Intercept or baseline hazard	
15a: Coefficients	Coefficients reported: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All univariate</li> <li>2. Univariate of included predictors in final model</li> <li>3. All multivariate</li> <li>4. Multivariate of predictors included in final model</li> </ol> (multiple option possible)
15a: Number of predictors	Number of predictors in final model
15a: Use of model	Use of model reported as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Only regression coefficients</li> <li>2. Intercept with regression coefficients</li> <li>3. Simplified score (incl. nomogram or app)</li> </ol> (multiple options possible)



