



Website reviews

Brixton Health/EpiCalc 2000

Website: <http://www.brixtonhealth.com>

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What is it?

The Brixton Health website provides free software, a manual and a sample dataset for public health and epidemiological research needs. EpiCalc 2000 is one of their popular software items, which provides statistical calculations for pre-tabulated data.

Who is it for?

Students and researchers in public health and epidemiology as well as clinicians will find EpiCalc 2000 useful to make simple, basic statistical calculations.

What information is contained?

EpiCalc 2000 contains multi-statistical functions for basic epidemiological calculations, including means, rates, sample sizes, comparisons and some statistical tests. A help file gives detailed information and references for all statistical functions.

How do I access it?

EpiCalc 2000 is a freeware and works on any 32-bit Windows system. You can simply go to the Brixton Health website, download and then run the file, and the application will be installed into your system.

After you start the EpiCalc 2000 application, you can see the main window split into two panels. The panel on the left is the calculation set tree view and the panel on the right is the output window. Press Shift-F10 or right click on tree view to start a new calculation. After choosing a calculation function, you can select/enter your data through the data-entry window and then click on OK, and the selected calculation function will list in the left panel tree view and the result will appear in the right sided output panel. You can always add another new calculation or modify an existing one, or add a note to any section of the tree view. Just like other Windows applications, you can save, print and export your calculation set.

The help function gives detailed instructions on how to use this application. It also provides a complete reference for each calculation function. Be sure to refer to the original documentation if you have any question regarding the calculation functions.

Comments

EpiCalc 2000 is an easy, well-documented statistical calculator. It is a simple, fast program for basic calculation and analysis needs. It is especially useful for estimating research results before using larger statistical software. All calculation functions are based on pre-tabulated data, other software is required to process your raw data. On the other hand, instead of entering the data cell by cell, copying/pasting multi-cells or loading a pre-prepared table will be more efficient and will produce fewer mistakes.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/Epi InfoWebsite: <http://www.cdc.gov/epiinfo>E-mail: epiinfo@cdc.gov**What is it?**

Epi Info is a multiple functionality application developed by the Division of Public Health Surveillance and Informatics, Epidemiology Program Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which is combined with database and epidemiologic statistical programs for public health and surveillance needs.

Who is it for?

Health professionals and medical researchers will find this application useful for conducting surveys, entering and analyzing data, maintaining databases and producing reports and maps.

What information is contained?

Epi Info contains a series of programs for public health research needs. **Make View** and **Enter Data** provide users with an easy way to create a new survey database, enter data and maintain an existing database. **Analyze Data** offers multiple statistical tools for analyzing simple to complex data. **Create Maps** and **Create Reports** are user friendly tools for preparing reports and maps, and **Nutrition** (NutStat) is another useful tool for recording and evaluating the nutritional status of children.

How do I access it?

You can go to the Epi Info website, and download and install the application into your Windows System. After starting the application, a switchboard will appear on your screen. You can run Epi Info programs either by clicking on the button or choosing from the menu. **Make View** lets you design the data entry form which can create a new database and/or link to an existing database. **Enter Data** will open the form for data entry. **Analyze Data** provides a series of tools for database management and statistical analyses. The left side is the analysis tree where you can select a command. The output will display on the top-right window, while the Analysis Program Editor on the bottom-right window displays the dialogue created from the Analysis Command Tree. You can edit the analysis program and then save your database project for future use. Statistical analysis tools include basic statistical calculations such as frequency, mean, standard deviation and advanced statistics such as Kaplan-Meier survival, Cox proportional hazard, and linear and logistic regression analyses. Epi Info also provides detailed online help and references for their calculation models. **Epi Map** is the Geographic Information System (GIS) utility for Epi Info. It allows users to display data on color/pattern or dot density maps. Epi Map uses shapefiles as its map data, which are available from Epi Info website as a free download.

Comments

Epi Info is a well-developed computer program with combined data management, statistical analysis, reporting and mapping and many other functions for epidemiological research needs. It provides health professionals an easy way to manager their database, analyze data and generate graphs, maps and reports. Since so many functions are included in the application, you may want to refer to the tutorials on the website to get a better understanding of the entire application before you start to use it. CDC also provides free technical support by email or by phone.

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