Student Exercises

Exercise 1

During the previous year, nine residents of a community died from the same type of cancer. List some reasons that might justify an investigation. (Exercise Answer Key)

Exercise 2

During August, a county health department received reports of 12 new cases of tuberculosis and 12 new cases of aseptic meningitis. Tuberculosis does not have a striking seasonal distribution; however, aseptic meningitis, which is caused primarily by a viral infection, is highly seasonal and peaks from August–October. What additional information is needed to determine whether either of these groups of cases is an outbreak? (Exercise Answer Key)

Exercise 3

Review the six case report forms in the Appendix and create a line listing based on the information. (Exercise Answer Key)

Exercise 4

You are called to help investigate a cluster of 17 men who developed leukemia in a community. Some of them worked as electrical repair men, and others were ham radio operators. Which study design would you choose to investigate a possible association between exposure to electromagnetic fields and leukemia? (Exercise Answer Key)

Exercise 5

The manager of a grocery store has reported a rash illness among the store's workers. What type of study would you use to determine the source of the outbreak? Why? What is the appropriate measure of association? After reviewing the table in the Appendix showing the data on exposure to celery for these workers, calculate the measure of association and interpret your results. (Exercise Answer Key)

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