

Appendix 2. Paradigmatic situations in which a strong recommendation may be warranted despite low or very low confidence in effect estimates (extracted from: Andrews JC, Schünemann HJ, Oxman AD, Pottie K, Meerpohl JJ, Coello PA, Rind D, Montori VM, Brito JP, Norris S, Elbarbary M, Post P, Nasser M, Shukla V, Jaeschke R, Brozek J, Djulbegovic B, Guyatt G. GRADE guidelines: 15. Going from evidence to recommendation-determinants of a recommendation's direction and strength. J Clin Epidemiol. 2013 Jul;66(7):726-35.)

Situation	Condition	Example
1	When low quality evidence suggests benefit in a lifethreatening situation (evidence regarding harms can be low or high)	Fresh frozen plasma or vitamin K in a patient receiving warfarin with elevated INR and an intracranial bleed. Only low quality evidence supports the benefits of limiting the extent of the bleeding
2	When low quality evidence suggests benefit and high quality evidence suggests harm or a very high cost	Head-to-toe CT/MRI screening for cancer. Low quality evidence of benefit of early detection but high quality evidence of possible harm and/or high cost (strong recommendation against this strategy)
3	When low quality evidence suggests equivalence of two alternatives, but high quality evidence of less harm for one of the competing alternatives	Helicobacter pylori eradication in patients with early stage gastric MALT lymphoma with H. pylori positive. Low quality evidence suggests that initial H. pylori eradication results in similar rates of complete response in comparison with the alternatives of radiation therapy or gastrectomy; high quality evidence suggests less harm/morbidity
4	When high quality evidence suggests equivalence of two alternatives and low quality evidence suggests harm in one alternative	Hypertension in women planning conception and in pregnancy. Strong recommendations for labetalol and nifedipine and strong recommendations against angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB)all agents have high quality evidence of equivalent beneficial outcomes, with low quality evidence for greater adverse effects with ACE inhibitors and ARBs

5	When high quality evidence suggests modest benefits and low/very low quality evidence suggests possibility of catastrophic harm	Testosterone in males with or at risk of prostate cancer. High quality evidence for moderate benefits of testosterone treatment in men with symptomatic androgen deficiency to improve bone mineral density and muscle strength. Low quality evidence for harm in patients with or at risk of prostate cancer
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Abbreviations: INR, international normalized ratio; CT, computed tomography; MRI, magnetic resonance imaging; MALT, mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue.