

Examples of Heuristics and Biases That Influence Decision Making	Heuristic or Bias Medical Example	Nonmedical Example
OVERATTACHMENT TO A PARTICULAR DIAGNOSIS		
<p>Anchoring is the tendency to lock onto salient features in the patient's initial presentation and failing to adjust this initial impression in the light of later information.</p>	<p>A patient is admitted from the emergency department with a diagnosis of heart failure. The hospitalists who are taking care of the patient do not pay adequate attention to new findings that suggest another diagnosis.</p>	<p>We buy a new car based on excellent reviews and tend to ignore or downplay negative features that are noticed.</p>
<p>Confirmation bias the tendency to look for confirming evidence to support a diagnosis rather than look for disconfirming evidence to refute it despite the latter often being more persuasive and definitive.</p>	<p>A patient is admitted with abdominal pain, vomiting, and diarrhea. Several family members have been sick so diagnosis is a viral AGE. The patient also had a CRP of 30. Alternative diagnosis was not considered initially.</p>	<p>A child will not eat broccoli because his best friend says it taste bad despite the fact that everyone else in his class likes it.</p>
<p>Premature closure, is the tendency to accept the first answer that comes along that explains the facts at hand, without considering whether there might be a different or better solution.</p>	<p>The emergency department clinician seeing a patient with recent onset of low back pain immediately settles on a diagnosis of lumbar disc disease without considering other possibilities in the differential diagnosis.</p>	<p>We want a plane ticket that costs no more than \$1,000 and has no more than one connection. We perform an online search and purchase the first ticket that meets these criteria without looking to see if there is a cheaper flight or one</p>
FAILURE TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE DIAGNOSIS		
<p>Search satisfying , is the tendency to call off a search once something is found and not considering additional findings or diagnosis.</p>	<p>A patient presents with the diagnosis of psuedotumor. Despite persistence of symptoms additional diagnosis or work up is not considered.</p>	
INHERITED THINKING		
<p>Triage-cueing is a predisposition toward a particular decision as a result of a judgment made by caregivers early in the patient care process.</p>	<p>A triage nurse enters a chief complaint of nursemaids elbow. Reduction of elbow is undertaken without obtaining the classic history. The patient had a fracture that was further displaced during the reduction process.</p>	

PREVALENCE PERCEPTION OR ESTIMATION		
Availability bias refers to our tendency to more easily recall things that we have seen recently or things that are common or that impressed us.	A clinician who just recently read an article on the pain from aortic aneurysm dissection may tend toward diagnosing it in the next few patients he sees who present with nonspecific abdominal pain, even though aortic dissections are rare.	Because of a recent news story on a tourist kidnapping in Country "A," we change the destination we have chosen for our vacation to Country "B."
PATIENT CHARACTERISTICS OR PRESENTATION CONTEXT		
Context errors reflect instances where we misinterpret the situation, leading to an erroneous conclusion.	We tend to interpret that a patient presenting with abdominal pain has a problem involving the gastrointestinal tract, when it may be something else entirely: for example, an endocrine, neurologic or vascular problem.	We see a work colleague picking up two kids from an elementary school and assume he or she has children, when they are instead picking up someone else's children.
Fundamental attribution error , is attributing the blame for a circumstance or event to the patient's personal qualities rather than the situation.	A patient with a history of psuedoseizures presents with a syncopal episode. The sycopal episode is also attributed to a non organic etiology.	
Ying-yang out , is the presumption that extensive prior investigation has ruled out any serious diagnosis.	The patient presents with an ALTE. Medical record review indicates a complete evaluation was done previously. A complete history and physical was not performed and a new diagnosis was missed.	
PHYSICIAN AFFECT OR PERSONALITY		
Affective bias refers to the various ways that our emotions, feelings, and biases affect judgment.	New complaints from patients known to be "frequent flyers" in the emergency department are not taken seriously.	We may have the belief that people who are poorly dressed are not articulate or intelligent.
Overconfidence/underconfidence , is being overconfident in(more likely) or underconfident in the efficacy of decisions that we make.		