

## **How to Ask a Research Question.**

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### **Overview**

- A study question should have one primary question
- Ask a research question that is:
  - Important
  - Specific
  - Answerable (by investigation or experiment)
- Formulate a research question that is “**FINER**”:
  - **F**easible
  - **I**nteresting
  - **N**ovel
  - **E**thical
  - **R**elevant
- Research questions come from:
  - Skepticism of conventional wisdom-  
“What is the evidence for these answers?” (T. Chalmers)
  - Meetings
  - Journal clubs
  - Teaching
  - Patient care
- A good research question requires a qualified and interested mentor
- A background literature review allows you to:
  - Ask a better question
  - Define questions that have been answered and still need to be answered
  - Provide insights and methodology
  - Identify future mentors or collaborators
- Research questions can be answered by more than 1 design
  - There is no one best single design to answer the question
  - Compromises in rigorous scientific integrity are made in the setting of limited resource and clinical reality

### **Reference**

Designing Clinical Research: An Epidemiologic Approach by Stephen B Hulley, Steven R Cummings, Warren S Browner, Deborah Grady, Norman Hearst. (2001)