

## **Appendix 1 (as supplied by the authors): Description of tools used to assess quality of observational studies and randomized controlled trials**

Even though several quality assessment tools for observational studies such as the MOOSE, Downs and Black checklist, and [Newcastle-Ottawa Scale](#) are available, none has been fully validated. Among these tools, the [Newcastle-Ottawa Scale](#) is most comprehensive for assessing the quality of non-randomized studies in meta-analyses. The [Newcastle-Ottawa Scale](#) for case-control and cohort studies consists of eight items with three subscales: selection of cases and controls, exposed cohort and non-exposed cohort (four items), comparability of cases and controls, cohorts (one item), and exposure, outcome (three items). A "star" system of the [Newcastle-Ottawa Scale](#) (range 0 to 9 stars) has been developed for the assessment: each study can be awarded a maximum of one star for each numbered item within the selection and exposure, outcome categories, while a maximum of two stars can be given for the comparability category.

Jadad scale includes 5-points for randomization (described as randomized, 1 point; table of random numbers or computer-generated randomization, additional 1 point), double-blind (described as double-blind, 1 point; use of masking such as identical placebo, additional 1 point), and follow-up (the numbers and reasons for withdrawal in each group are stated; 1 point) in the report of an [randomized controlled trial](#). In general, scores of 2 or less are considered as low quality, and scores of 3 to 5 are considered as high quality.