

I chose the theme of my diploma thesis for two reasons. One being my newly found interest in epidemiology and evidence based medicine, the other being my commitment to the treatment and prevention of diseases primarily affecting women.

My enthusiasm for evidence based medicine and epidemiology has steadily grown over the past years. As I'm approaching the end of medical school, friends and family apparently see it as their right to question the doctor-to-be about anything from local syphilis outbreaks to homeopathic lice repellent remedies. Initially not able to give satisfactory answers, I was forced to orient myself in a field I previously had not paid much attention to.

To my surprise, as I familiarized myself with the basics of epidemiological terminology and principles of proper trial conduction, I got increasingly interested in the topic. I could suddenly see examples of media's manipulation with statistics that I had not been able to spot before. I now understood how drug trials could be biased by improper randomization, something I normally wouldn't have given a second thought. It changed my view on many elements of medicine and its supporting sciences. It made me more aware of how easy it is to be flawed.

With this in mind, I delved into the vast amount of material to be found on my chosen topic, determined to do my job as thoroughly as possible, and to try to utilize as many quality sources as I could. My aspirations may have been a bit too high; but I've found general reviews and meta-analyses very useful for my work on this paper on hormone dependent cancers in females. It has been very interesting to work in this manner.

My main focus has been on breast cancer and its prevention. This is a topic most women can relate to, since (according to the American national cancer institute, based on current rates) 12.7 percent of western women born today will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some time in their lives. I am very much looking forward to following the development in both screening methods for and treatment of hormone dependent cancers in the future, and hopefully play a role in the process myself.