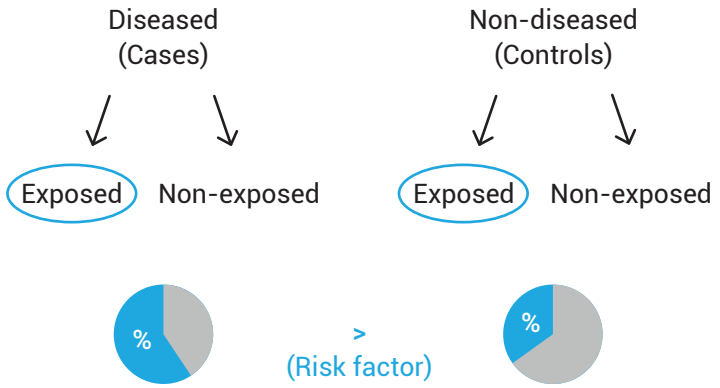
Case-control studies—the basics



In a case-control study, cases are compared to controls.

If the percentage of exposed individuals is higher in cases than in controls, it can be assumed that the exposure is a risk factor.

	Diseased	Non-diseased
Exposed	A	B
Non-exposed	C	D

Proportion of exposed

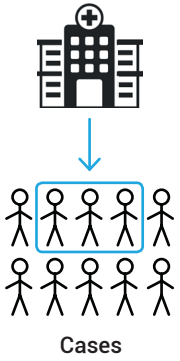
$$\frac{A}{A+C} > \frac{B}{B+D}$$

~~Prevalence~~
~~Incidence~~

Selection of cases

The source of the cases and the eligibility criteria need to be carefully selected before the study is started. Cases should be as comparable to the general population of cases as possible.

Is it preferable to recruit incident or prevalent cases?
Ideally incident cases are recruited as the disease occurs. Prevalent cases are recruited easier and faster after their disease has occured and can be problematic.



Socioeconomic status
Education
Vaccination status
Nutrition