

# Preliminary evidence for use of board games to improve knowledge in health outcomes

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Board games can engage patients in play and fantasy, and by enabling face-to-face interaction, can help educate patients on health-related knowledge and behaviors. A new systemic review and meta-analysis of trials assessing the outcomes achieved using board games in children through older adults is published in *Games for Health*.

Andrea Gauthier, University of Toronto (Mississauga, Canada), Pamela Kato, Kim Bul, Ian Dunwell, and Petros Lameris, Coventry University (Coventry, U.K.), and Aimee Walker-Clarke, University of Warwick (Coventry, U.K.) coauthored the article entitled "Board Games for Health: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis." The article evaluated 21 studies of non-digital [board games](#), the majority of which used education to increase [health](#)-related knowledge and behaviors.

The goal of the systemic review and meta-analysis was to answer two main questions: what kinds of board games targeting medical and health-related outcomes have been evaluated in the literature; and what has been the overall impact of the board games on health-related outcomes?

"While most attention has been given to video games for health, board games can reach large numbers of people and have been generally well received, but have they had the desired effects? Gauthier and colleagues' [meta-analysis](#) revealed promising results. Board games may provide a lower cost, widely disseminable method for delivering the benefits of games for health," says Tom Baranowski, Ph.D., Editor-in-Chief of *Games for Health* Journal, from USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center, and Department of Pediatrics, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX.

**More information:** Andrea Gauthier et al, Board Games for Health: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis, *Games for Health Journal* (2018). [DOI: 10.1089/g4h.2018.0017](https://doi.org/10.1089/g4h.2018.0017)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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