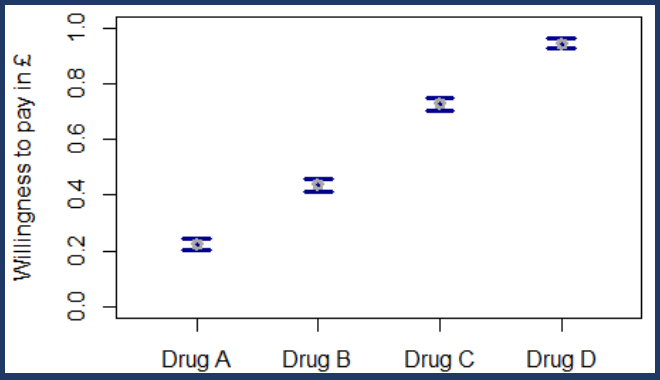
Does the quality of the evidence base affect people's trust and choices?

Yes!

In our studies people did not simply pick the drug with the highest effectiveness, but traded effectiveness off with the quality of the evidence. In this example people tended to choose Drug B, (lower efficacy but based on higher quality evidence).

So how much do people *value* evidence quality?

We gave people details of 4 drugs with the same effectiveness but different levels of evidence quality and asked how much they would be willing to pay for each, on a scale from £0 to £1.



People seem to treat quality on a linear scale: they value each increment increase in evidence quality about the same.

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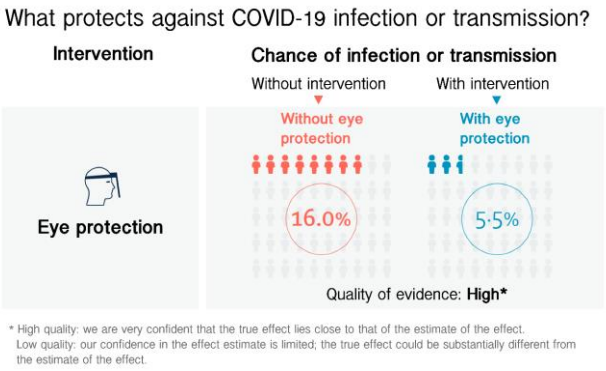
We also investigated effects on **trust** when communicating the quality of evidence.



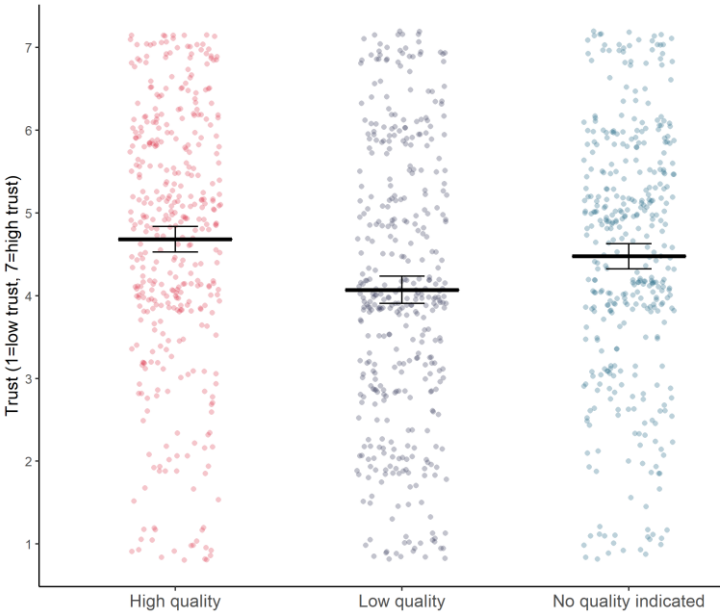
People were shown one of three pictures. Each showed information on the effectiveness of eye protection, but differed on the quality of evidence information that was given:

Quality was said to be high, low, or no quality indication was shown.

We then asked people how much they trusted the information on the effectiveness of eye protection.

People trusted the information less if it was based on low compared to high quality evidence.

BUT: when not shown a quality indicator they trusted the information about as much as people who were told it was based on high quality evidence.



It seems that unless you tell them otherwise, people assume your information is based on high quality evidence.

Read more about our experiments!

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