

# **Utility-Based Optimization of Combination Therapy Using Ordinal Toxicity and Efficacy in Phase I/II Clinical Trials**

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Computer Programming, Prior Calibration, Model Refinements,  
Graphics

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# **Dose-Finding for Combination Therapy of Bladder Cancer**

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**Goals:** Find an optimal dose pair of combination therapy = chemotherapeutic (chemo) agents gemcitabine + cisplatin + biological agent for untreated advanced bladder cancer, based on **Toxicity** and **Efficacy** (a “phase I/II” trial)

## Dose-Finding for Combination Therapy of Bladder Cancer

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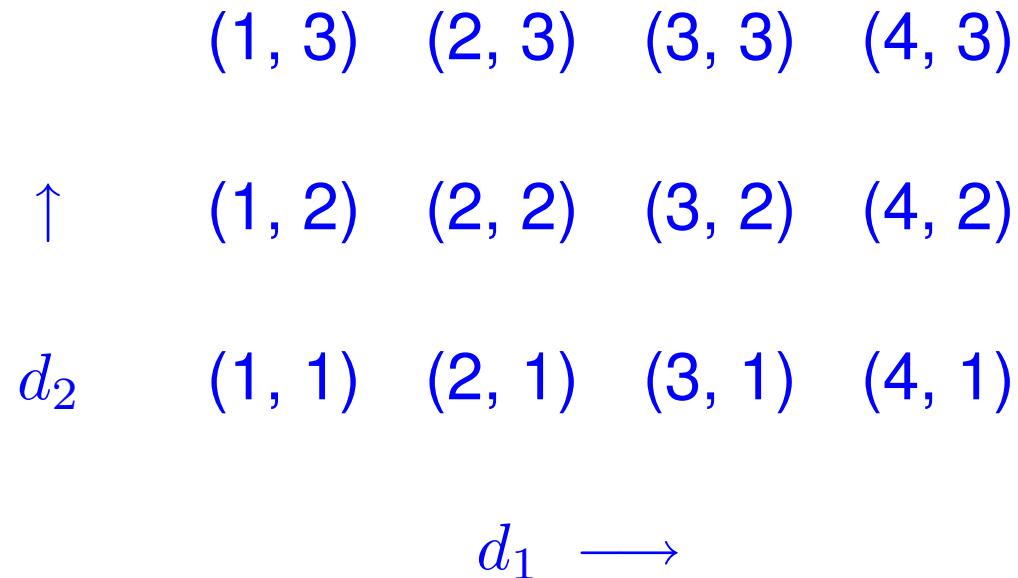
**Treatment Regime:** In each 28-day cycle, the patient receives

1. biological agent orally each day at dose levels  $d_1 = 1, 2, 3$  or  $4$
2. gemcitabine on days (1, 8, 15) at dose levels  $d_2 = 1, 2$  or  $3$  ( $750, 1000$  or  $1250$  mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day)
3. a fixed dose of  $70$  mg/m<sup>2</sup> cisplatinum on day 2

$$\implies \mathbf{d} = (d_1, d_2) \in \{1, 2, 3, 4\} \times \{1, 2, 3\}$$

## The Dose Pair Domain $\mathcal{D}$

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$d_1$  = dose of biological agent

$d_2$  = dose of chemo agent gemcitabine

## **Clinical Outcomes (evaluated over two 28-day cycles )**

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**Toxicity** includes AEs (fatigue, diarrhea, mucositis) related to the biological agent and chemo-related AEs (renal tox, neurotoxicity)

$Y_1$  = 0 if no grade 3,4 (severe) TOX

$Y_1$  = 1 if grade 3,4 TOX occurs, but **resolved within 2 weeks**

$Y_1$  = 2 if grade 3,4 TOX occurs, & **not resolved within 2 weeks**

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**Efficacy** is evaluated by the end of two cycles (day 56)

$Y_2 = 0$  if progressive disease (**PD**) at any time in the first 2 cycles

$Y_2 = 1$  if stable disease (**SD**) at day 56

$Y_2 = 2$  if complete or partial remission (**CR/PR**) at day 56

## Interim Within-Patient Treatment Modifications

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1. If grade 1 or 2 non-haematologic **TOX** in cycle 1, the dose of the **biological** agent is reduced
2. If the patient does not recover from a grade 3, 4 non-haematologoc **TOX** in two weeks, the bio agent is stopped, but the patient may continue to receive the chemo agents (physician decision)
3. If  $Y_1 = 2$  (unresolved gr. 3,4 **TOX**) or  $Y_2 = 2$  (**PD**) then treatment is stopped

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4.  $Y_1 = 2$  and no **PD** before day 56  $\implies Y_2$  is *inevaluable*

## The Outcome Domain

$$Y_2$$
$$0 = \text{PD}$$
$$1 = \text{SD}$$
$$2 = \text{CR/PR}$$

---

0	(0, 0)	(0, 1)	(0, 2)	—
---	--------	--------	--------	---

$Y_1$	1	(1, 0)	(1, 1)	(1, 2)	—
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2	(2, 0)	(2, 1)	(2, 2)	(2, Ineval)
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10 elementary outcomes, including  $\{Y_1 = 2 \text{ and } Y_2 \text{ inevaluable}\}$

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Outcomes

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Joint pmf

$\pi(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) = \Pr(\mathbf{Y} = \mathbf{y} \mid Z = 1, \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta})$

where  $\mathbf{y} = (y_1, y_2)$  is observed if  $Z = 1$

## Likelihood

$$Z = I(Y_2 \text{ is evaluable}), \quad \zeta = \Pr(Z = 1)$$

$$\delta(\mathbf{y}) = I(\mathbf{Y} = \mathbf{y}, Z = 1)$$

$$\delta_1(y_1) = I(Y_1 = y_1)$$

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathbf{Y}, Z \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) =$$

$$\prod_{Z=0}^1 \left[ \zeta \prod_{\mathbf{y}} \left\{ \pi(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) \right\}^{\delta(\mathbf{y})} \right]^Z \left[ (1 - \zeta) \prod_{y_1=0}^2 \left\{ \pi_{1,y_1}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) \right\}^{\delta_1(y_1)} \right]^{1-Z}$$



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$$\Pr(Y = 1|d, \alpha) = \xi\{\eta(d, \alpha), \lambda\} = 1 - (1 + \lambda e^{\eta(d, \alpha)})^{-1/\lambda}, \quad \lambda > 0$$

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3.  $\lambda=1 \implies \xi\{\eta(d, \alpha), 1\} = \frac{e^{\eta(d, \alpha)}}{1+e^{\eta(d, \alpha)}} \quad (\text{logistic})$

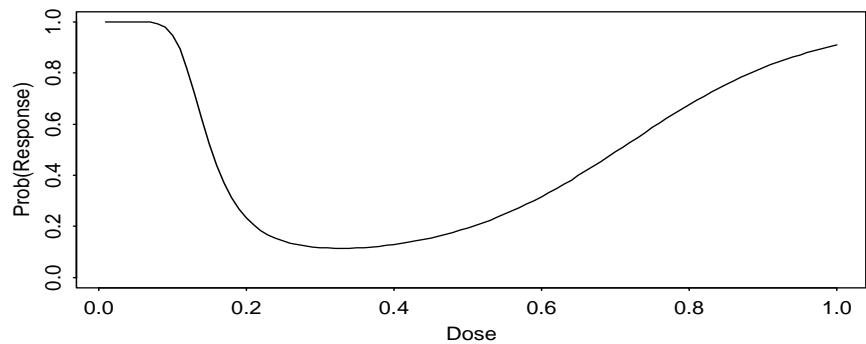
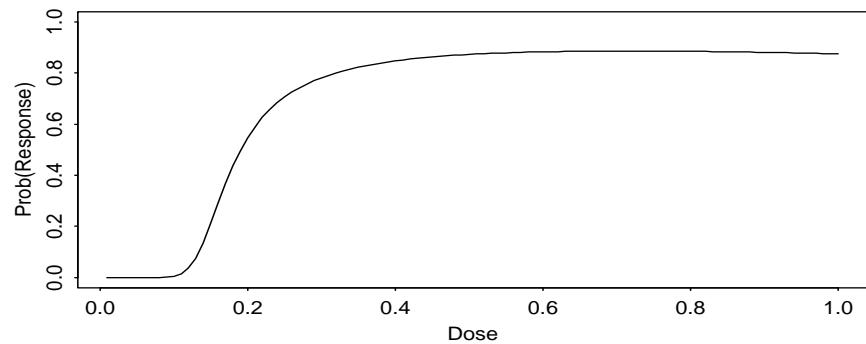
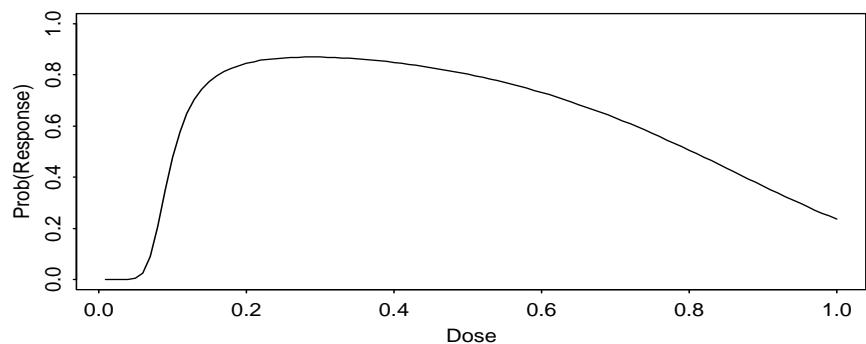
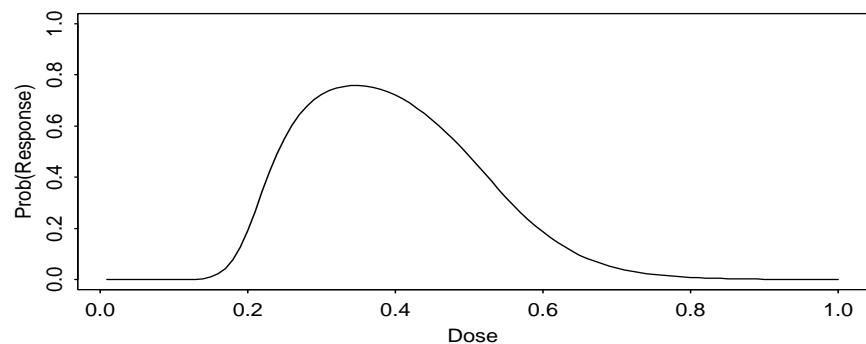
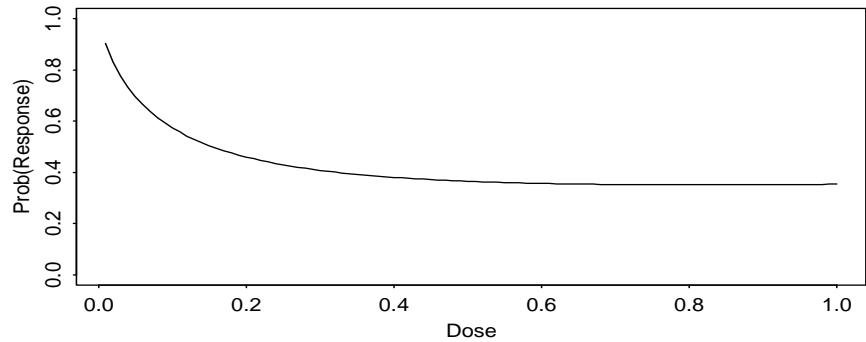
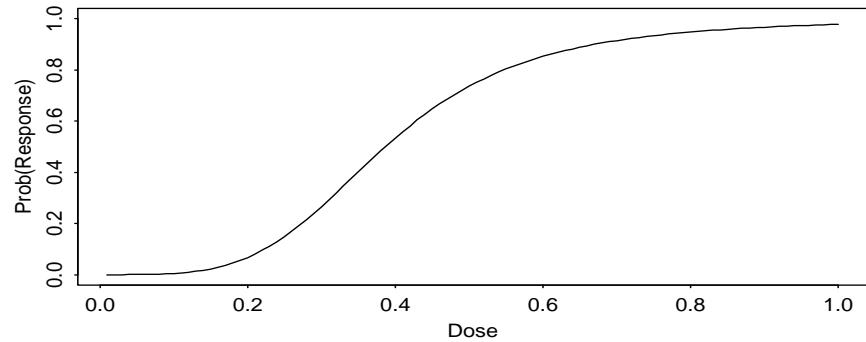
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3.  $\lambda=1 \implies \xi\{\eta(d, \alpha), 1\} = \frac{e^{\eta(d, \alpha)}}{1+e^{\eta(d, \alpha)}} \quad (\text{logistic})$
4.  $\lim_{\lambda \rightarrow 0} \xi(\eta(d, \alpha), \lambda) = 1 - \exp\{-e^{\eta(d, \alpha)}\} \quad (\text{compl. log-log})$





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To Accommodate Two Linear Terms:

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$$\xi^* \{ \eta_1, \eta_2, \lambda, \gamma \} = 1 - \{ 1 + \lambda(e^{\eta_1} + e^{\eta_2} + \gamma e^{\eta_1 + \eta_2}) \}^{-1/\lambda}$$

$\gamma$  accounts for interaction between the two agents

$\gamma = 0 \implies$  Additive effects  $e^{\eta_1}$  and  $e^{\eta_2}$  in the GAO model

## Linear terms determining the marginal of $Y_k$

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4.  $\boldsymbol{\theta}_k = (\boldsymbol{\alpha}_k^{(1)}, \boldsymbol{\alpha}_k^{(2)}, \lambda_k, \gamma_k)$

## Marginal Distributions

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For each outcome  $k = 1, 2$  and levels  $y = 1, \dots, m_k$ ,

$$\Pr(Y_k \geq y \mid Y_k \geq y-1, \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \xi^* \{ \eta_{k,y}^{(1)}(d_1, \boldsymbol{\alpha}_k^{(1)}), \eta_{k,y}^{(2)}(d_2, \boldsymbol{\alpha}_k^{(2)}), \lambda_k, \gamma_k \}$$

$$\equiv \xi_{k,y}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) \quad \implies$$

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$$\equiv \xi_{k,y}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) \implies$$

$$\pi_{k,0}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = 1 - \xi_{k,1}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)$$

$$\pi_{k,y}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \{1 - \xi_{k,y+1}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)\} \prod_{j=1}^y \xi_{k,j}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k), \quad 1 \leq y \leq m_k - 1$$

$$\pi_{k,m_k}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \prod_{j=1}^{m_k} \xi_{k,j}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)$$

In the three-level ordinal outcome case, the unconditional marginal probabilities are

$$\pi_{k,0}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = 1 - \xi_{k,1}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)$$

$$\pi_{k,1}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \xi_{k,1}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) - \xi_{k,1}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)\xi_{k,2}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)$$

$$\pi_{k,2}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \xi_{k,1}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) \xi_{k,2}^*(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)$$

## Bivariate Distribution of $(Y_1, Y_2)$

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Use a Gaussian copula, given by

$$C_\rho(u, v) = \Phi_\rho\{\Phi^{-1}(u), \Phi^{-1}(v)\} \quad \text{for } 0 \leq u, v \leq 1.$$

$\Phi_\rho$  = cdf of a bivariate std normal with correlation  $\rho$

$\Phi$  = usual  $N(0,1)$  cdf

The cdf of each  $Y_k$  is

$$F_k(y \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } y < 0 \\ 1 - \pi_{k,1}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) - \pi_{k,2}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) & \text{if } 0 \leq y < 1 \\ 1 - \pi_{k,2}(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) & \text{if } 1 \leq y < 2 \\ 1 & \text{if } y \geq 2 \end{cases}$$

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The joint pmf of  $\mathbf{Y}$  is

$$\pi(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) = \sum_{a=1}^2 \sum_{b=1}^2 (-1)^{a+b} C_\rho(u_a, v_b)$$

$$u_1 = F_1(y_1 \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}), \quad v_1 = F_2(y_2 \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta})$$

$$u_2 = F_1(y_1 - 1 \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}), \quad v_2 = F_2(y_2 - 1 \mid \mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta})$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\pi(\mathbf{y}) = & \Phi_\rho \{ \Phi^{-1} \circ F_1(y_1), \Phi^{-1} \circ F_2(y_2) \} \\
& - \Phi_\rho \{ \Phi^{-1} \circ F_1(y_1 - 1), \Phi^{-1} \circ F_2(y_2) \} \\
& - \Phi_\rho \{ \Phi^{-1} \circ F_1(y_1), \Phi^{-1} \circ F_2(y_2 - 1) \} \\
& + \Phi_\rho \{ \Phi^{-1} \circ F_1(y_1 - 1), \Phi^{-1} \circ F_2(y_2 - 1) \}
\end{aligned}$$

$$\theta = (\theta_1, \theta_2, \rho) \quad \text{and} \quad \dim(\theta) = 21$$

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1. Elicit utilites from each of several individuals
2. Show all elicited values (anonymously) to all individuals, and allow them to adjust their utilties

## Establishing Utilities

**The Delphi method:** A tool for establishing consensus among experts (Dalkey, 1969; Brook, Chassin, Fink, et al., 1986)

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Nadine Houede did this via questionnaire with 8 French medical oncologists who treat bladder cancer patients, using a utility scale of 0 to 100, and finished after 2 rounds

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	$Y_2 = 0$ <b>PD</b>	$Y_2 = 1$ <b>SD</b>	$Y_2 = 2$ <b>CR/PR</b>	$Y_2$ Inevaluable
$Y_1 = 0$	25	76	100	—
$Y_1 = 1$	10	60	82	—
$Y_1 = 2$	2	40	52	0

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For  $U(y)$  = the numerical utility of outcome  $y$ , the **mean utility for a patient treated with  $d$**  is

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Given current  $data_n = \{(\mathbf{Y}_1, \mathbf{d}_1), \dots, (\mathbf{Y}_n, \mathbf{d}_n)\}$ , select

$$\mathbf{d}^{opt}(data_n) = \operatorname{argmax}_{\mathbf{d} \in \mathcal{D}} \int_{\boldsymbol{\theta}} u(\mathbf{d}, \boldsymbol{\theta}) p(\boldsymbol{\theta} \mid data_n) d\boldsymbol{\theta}$$

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## Additional Safety Rules

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### 1. Do Not Skip Untried Dose Pairs:

If  $(d_1, d_2)$  is the current dose pair, then escalation is allowed to as yet untried pairs  $(d_1 + 1, d_2)$ ,  $(d_1, d_2 + 1)$ , or  $(d_1 + 1, d_2 + 1)$ .

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### 2. Stop The Trial if All Dose Pairs are Too Toxic:

For  $\pi_{1,2}^{max}$  = fixed upper limit on  $\Pr(Y_2 = 2)$ , and  $p_U$  = a fixed upper probability cut-off (e.g. .80 to .90), **terminate accrual** if

$$\min_{\mathbf{d}} \Pr\{\pi_{1,2}(\mathbf{d}, \theta) > \pi_{1,2}^{max} \mid data\} > p_U$$

# Simulations

## Simulations

$N_{max} = 48$ , choose  $d$  for cohorts of 3 patients, start at  $d = (2,2)$ , safety stopping rule applied with  $\pi_{1,2}^{max} = .33$  and  $p_U = .80$ .

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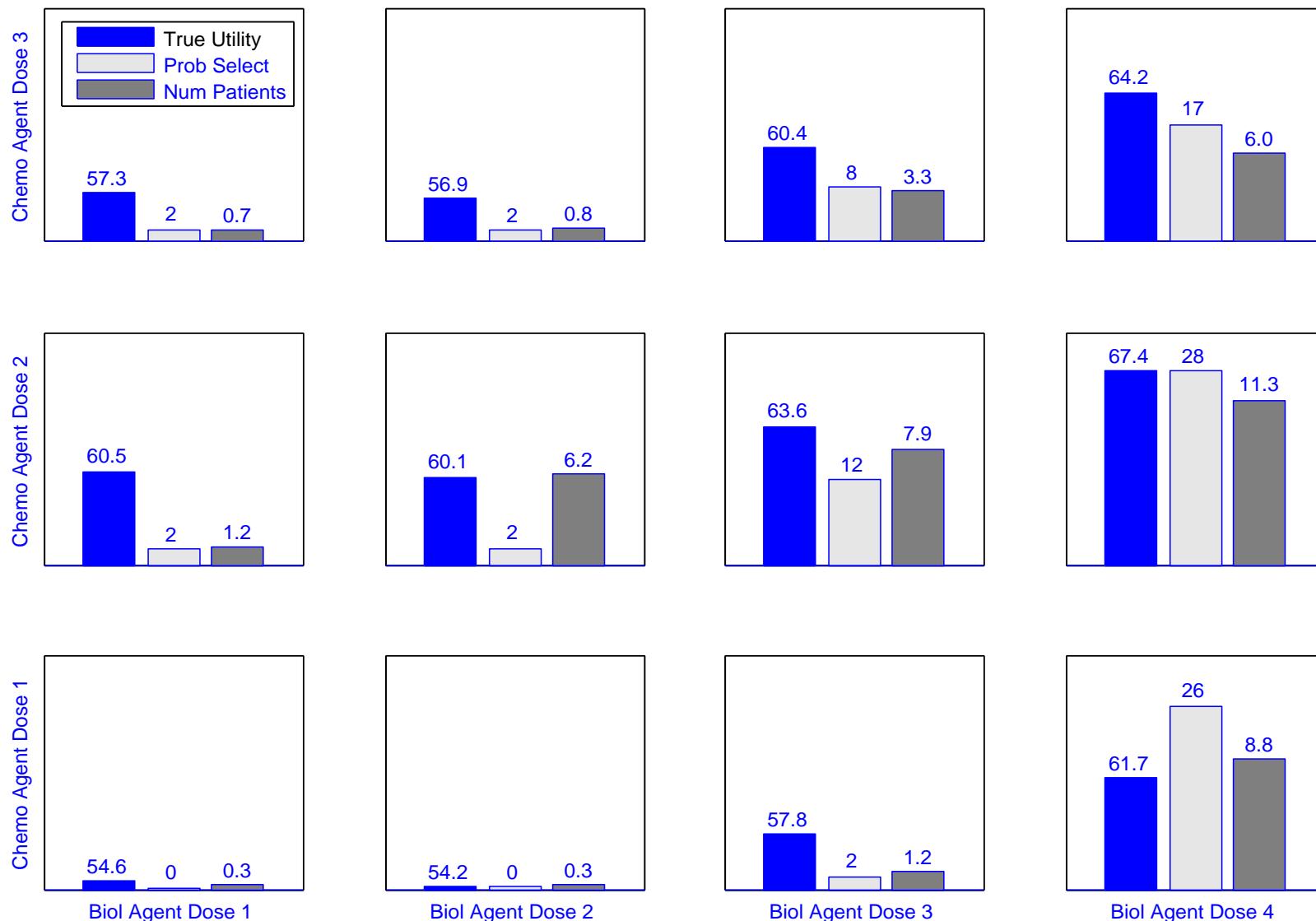
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1000 runs per scenario

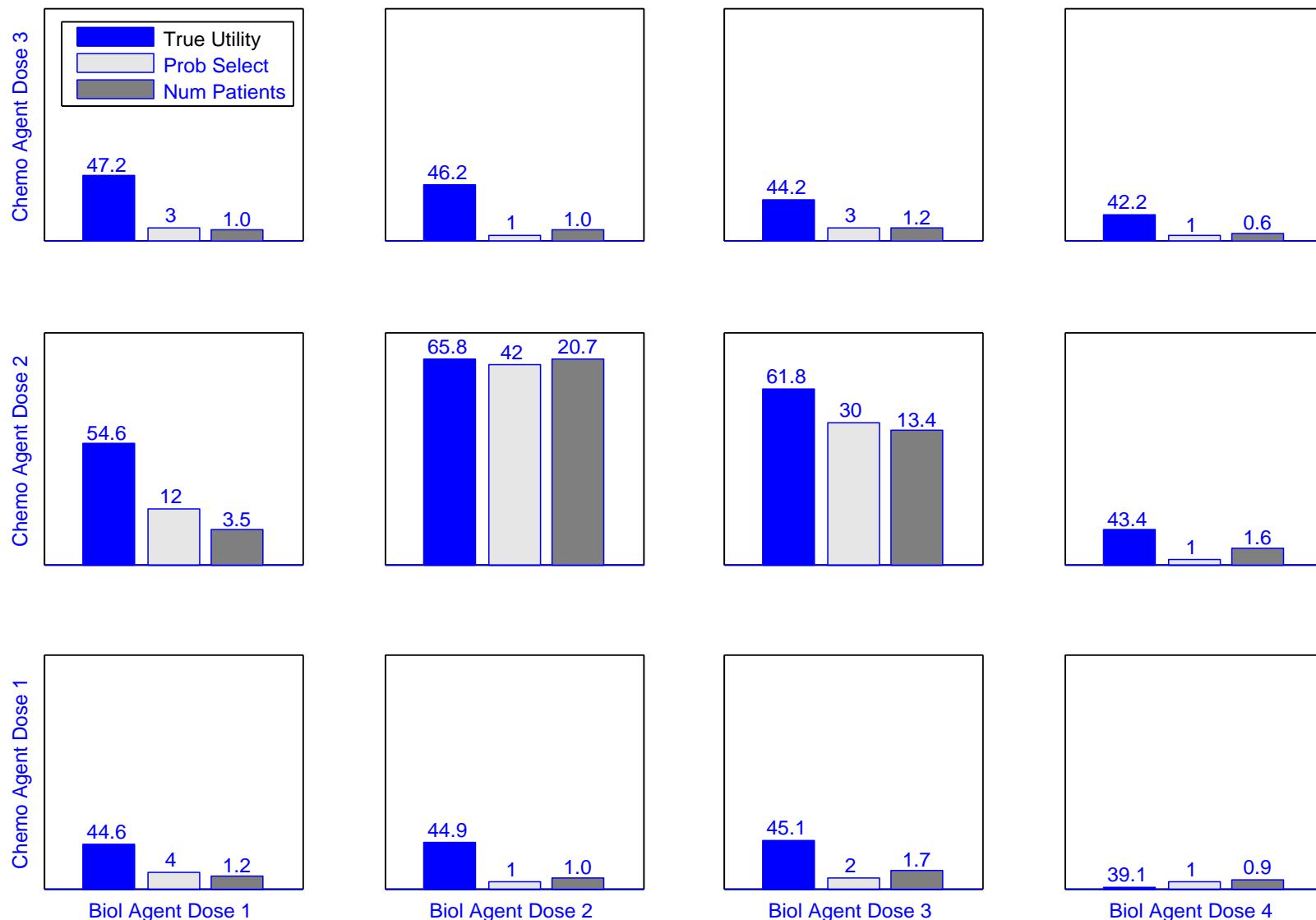


## Scenario 1



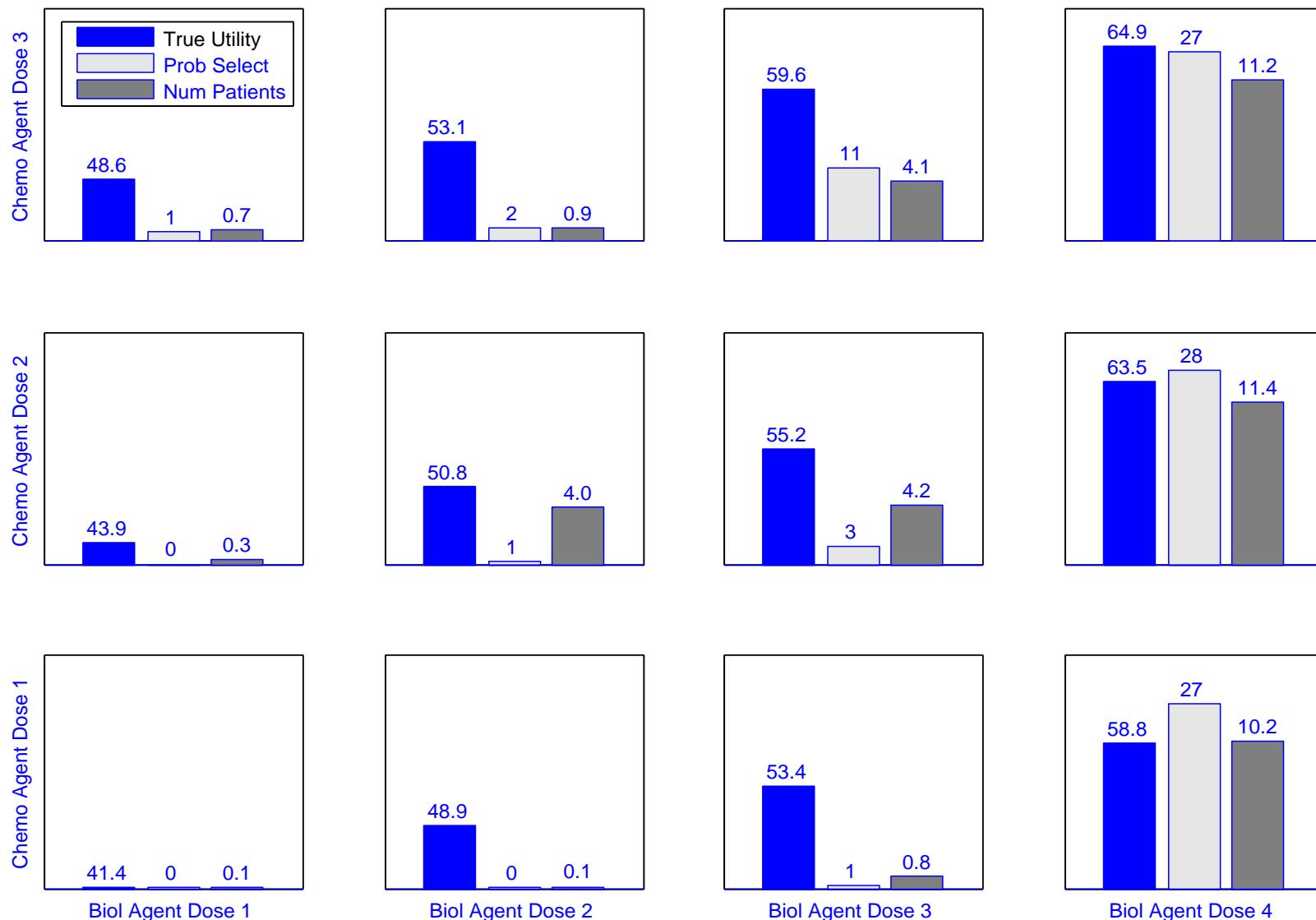


## Scenario 2



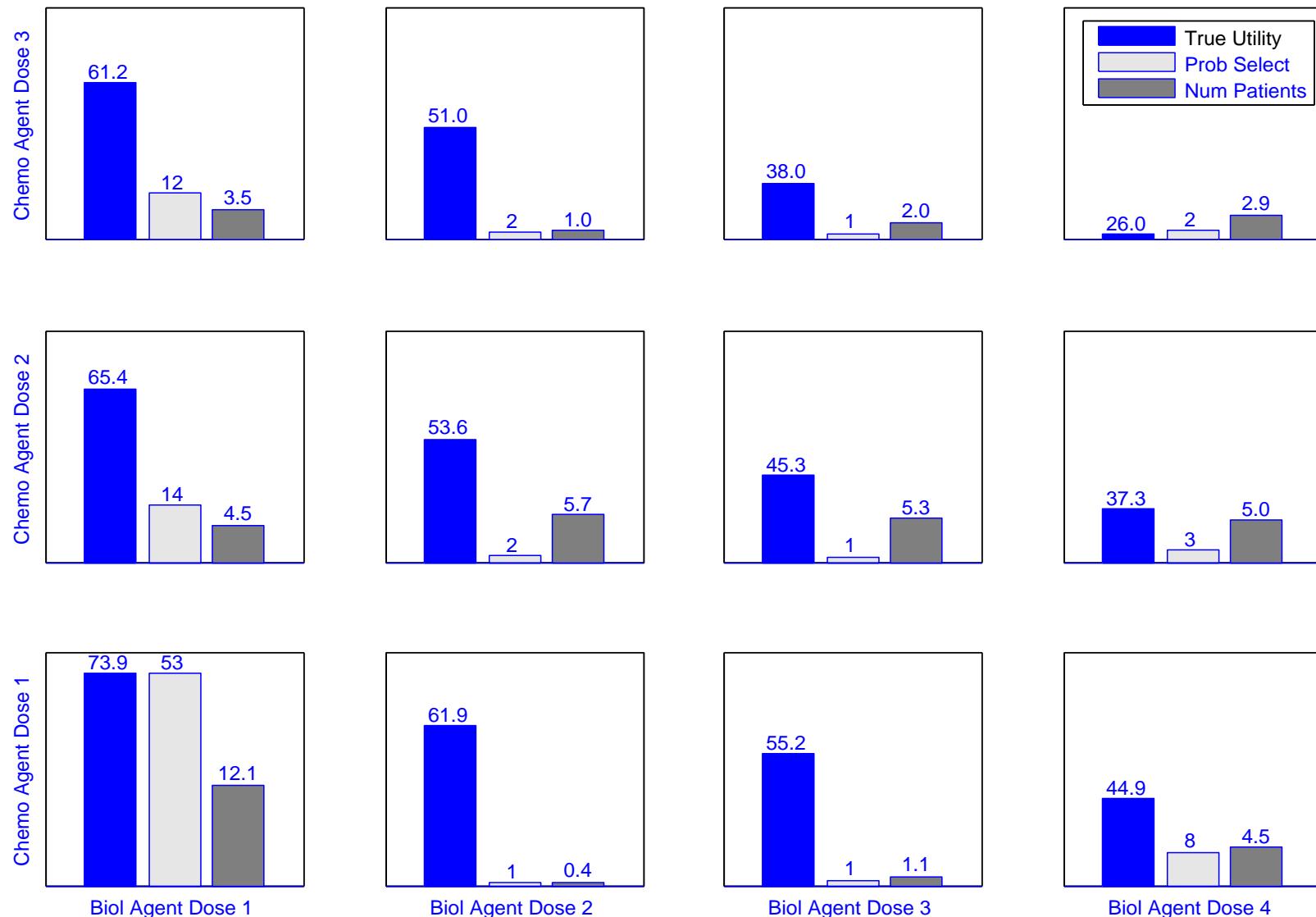


## Scenario 3





Scenario 4



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4. **Stupid Priors Give Stupid Designs** : A naive “uninformative” prior with  $E(\boldsymbol{\theta}) = \mathbf{0}$  and all prior standard deviations = 1000 gives *terrible* results

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