DAGitty.net, v3.0

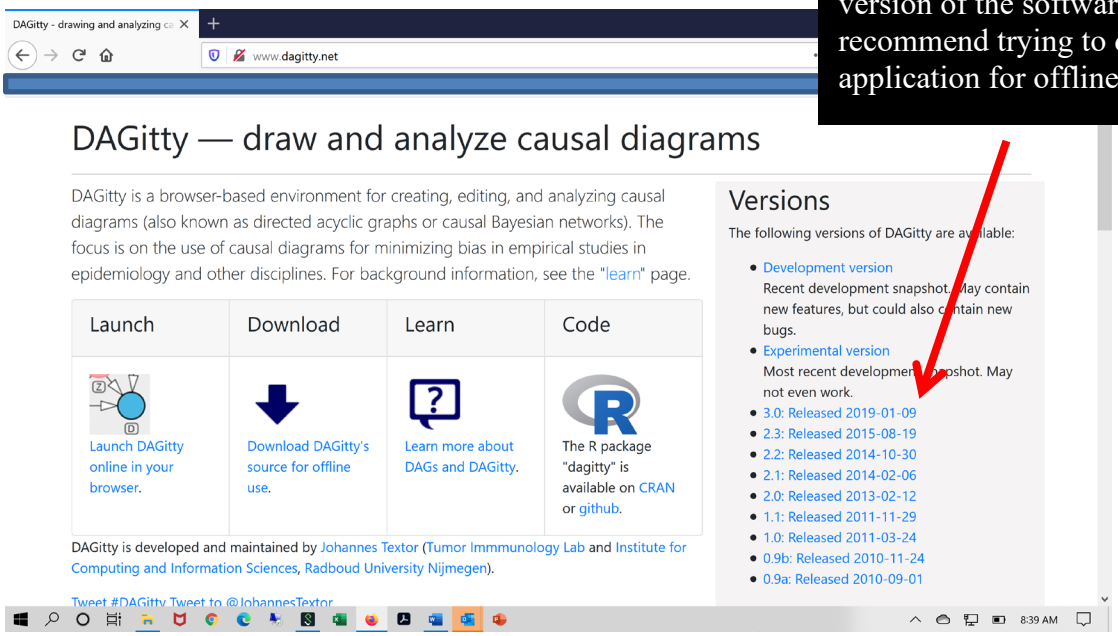
DAGitty.net is open source software to create and analyze directed acyclic graphs (DAGs). Once users become familiar with setting up (creating) DAGs, the interface is an easier and more flexible method of drawing DAGs than, say, the drawing tools in Microsoft Word. The real utility of DAGitty.net, however, is its analytic capability. Notably, the software can analyze very complex DAGs and assist users in the identification of minimally sufficient sets of variables for adjustment in order to estimate the total causal effect of exposure on disease, as well as direct effects. Follow the steps below to create your own DAG.

Note: Because DAGitty.net is relatively new and open source, you might encounter various deficiencies in terms of browser compatibility, cryptic error messages, or help availability. In other words, there may be bugs. If you cannot get the program to run in your computing environment, you might try another browser, seek assistance from a colleague, or try another computer. The developer, Dr. Johannes Textor, is also interested in hearing about bugs such that his team can address them. His e-mail address is on the website or you can tweet him.

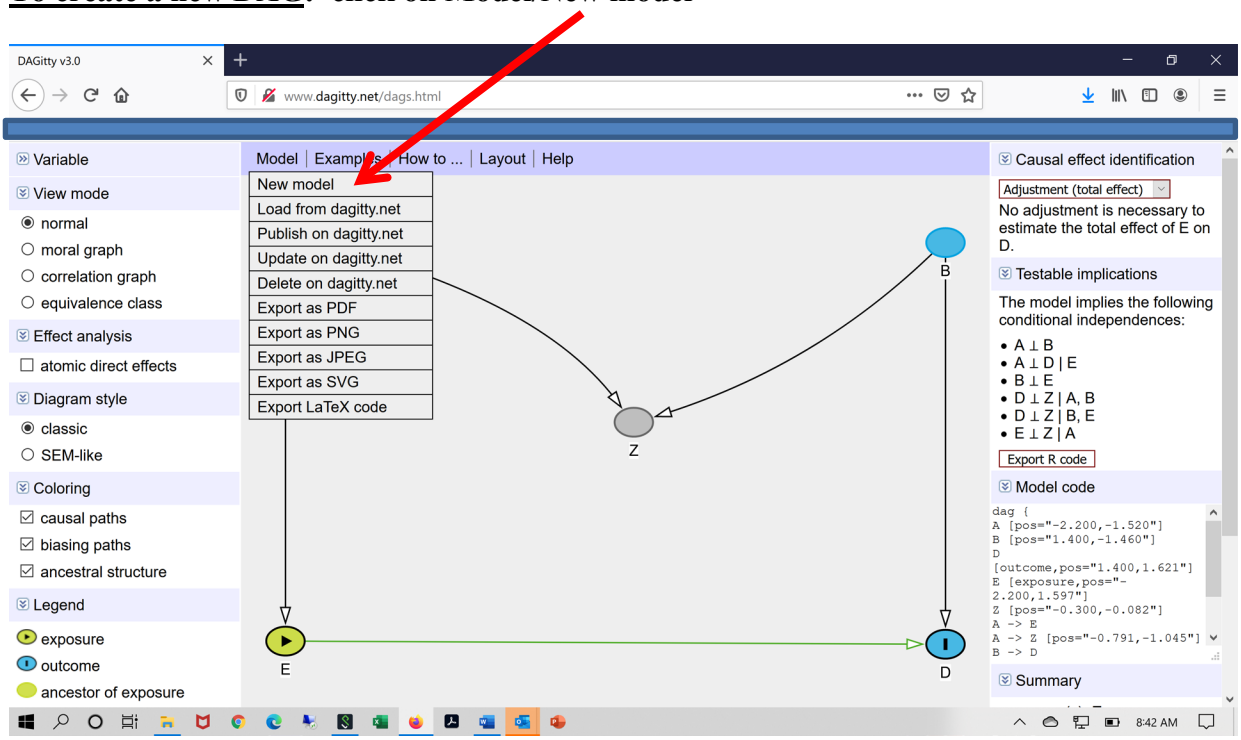
1) Go to DAGitty.net

2) Click on Version "3.0: Released 2019-01-09"

This will take you to the web-based version of the software. We don't recommend trying to download the application for offline use.

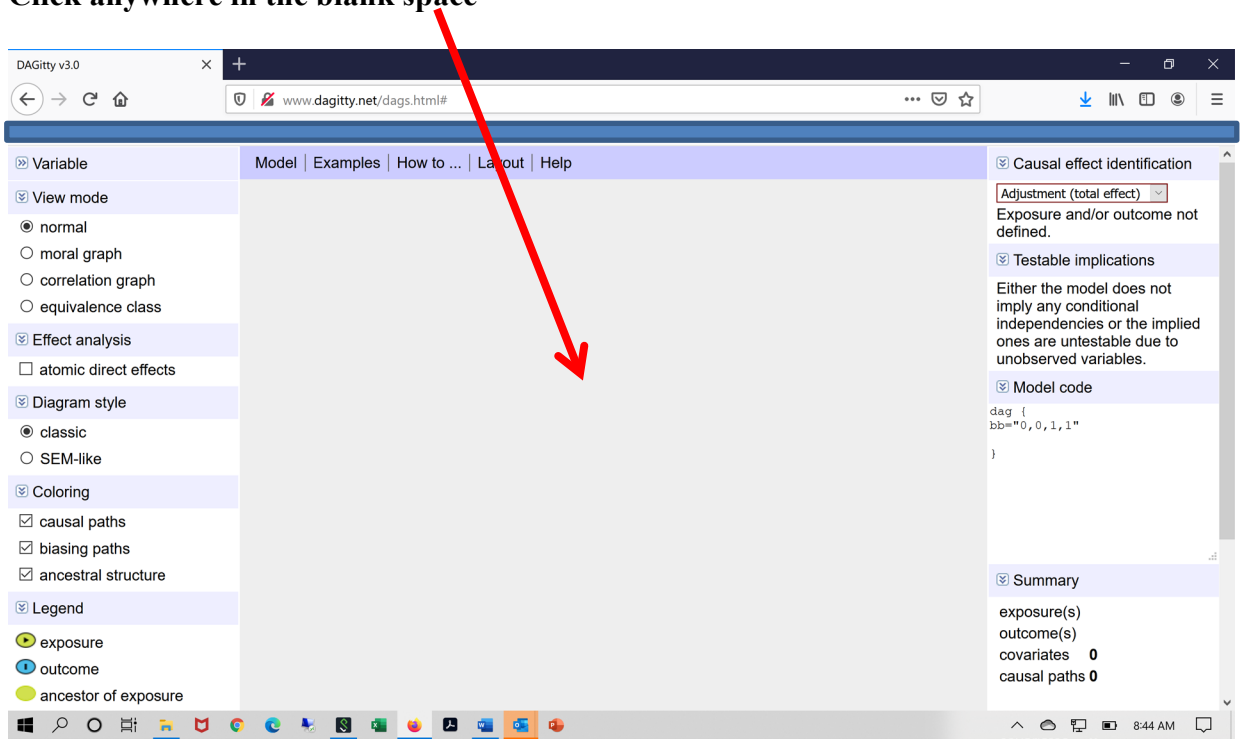


3) **<u>To create a new DAG</u>: click on Model/New model**



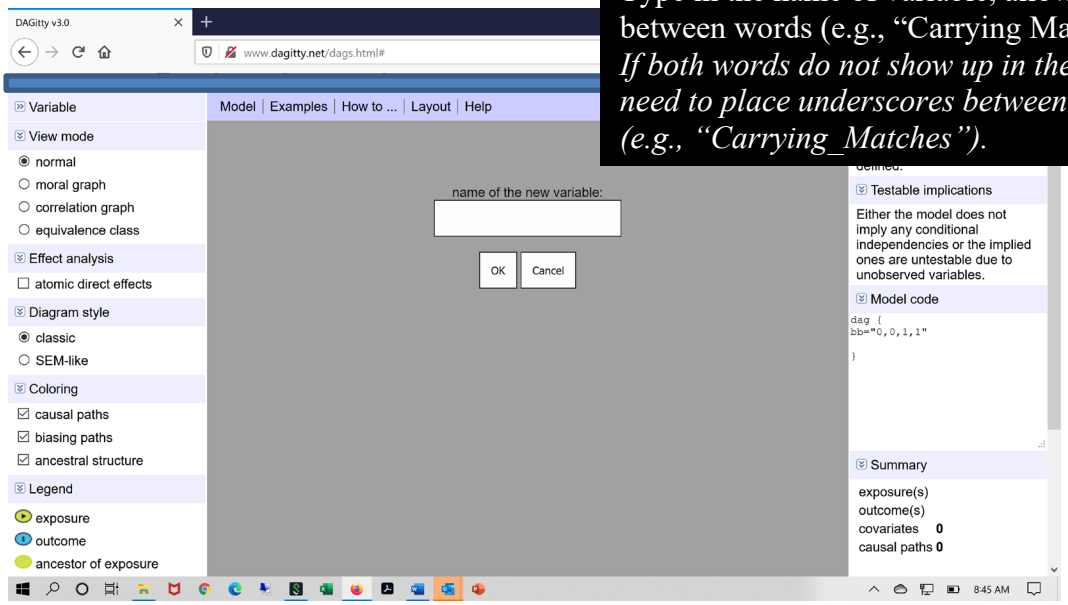
You may get a message from your browser that the site is "using a scripted window to ask you for information. If you trust this website, click here to allow scripted windows…". Go ahead and click on this message to proceed and click on "Allow Scripted Windows" when prompted.

4) Click anywhere in the blank space

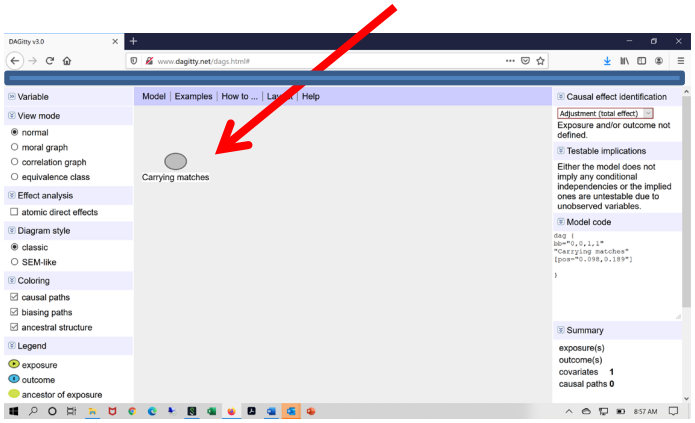


5) Enter the exposure variable

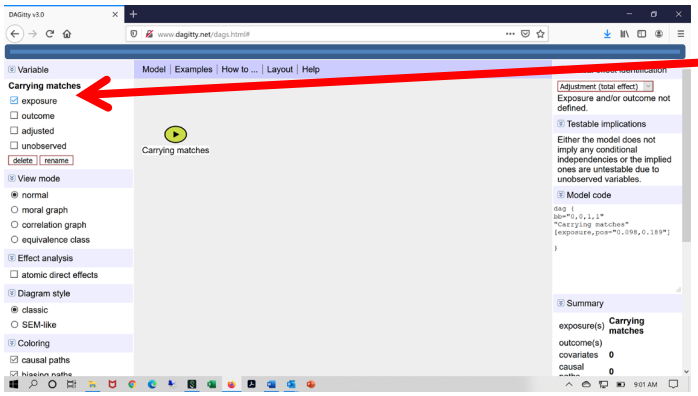
Type in the name of variable, allowing for spaces between words (e.g., "Carrying Matches").
If both words do not show up in the DAG, you may need to place underscores between the words (e.g., "Carrying_Matches").

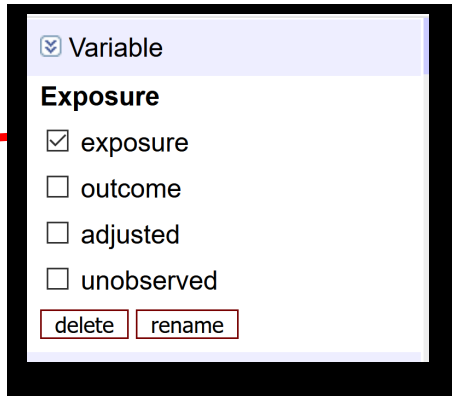


5a) Set your variable as the exposure: Click on your variable

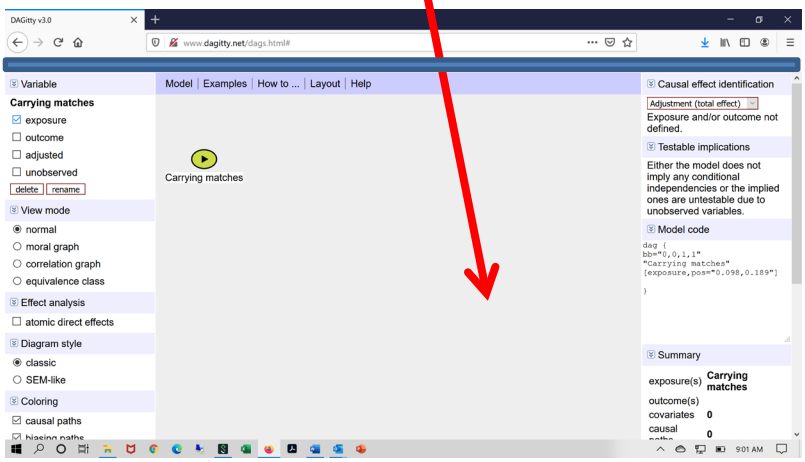


5b) Mark "exposure"

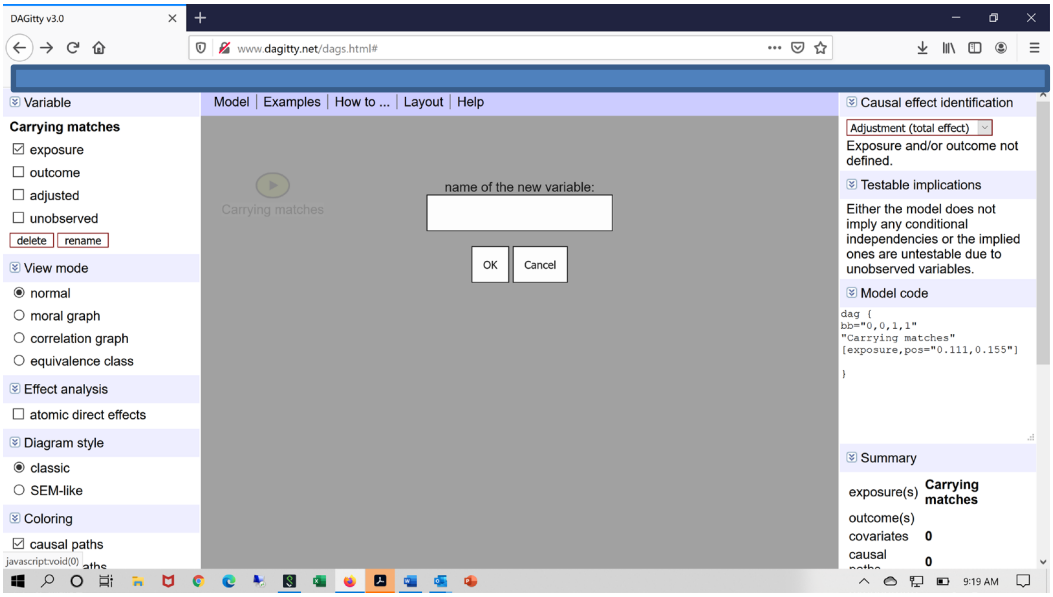




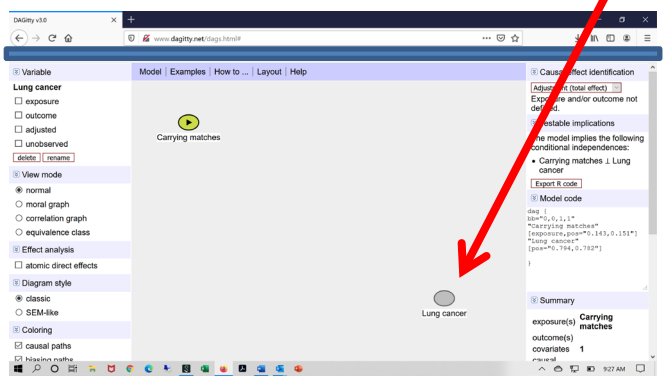
6) Click anywhere in the blank space again

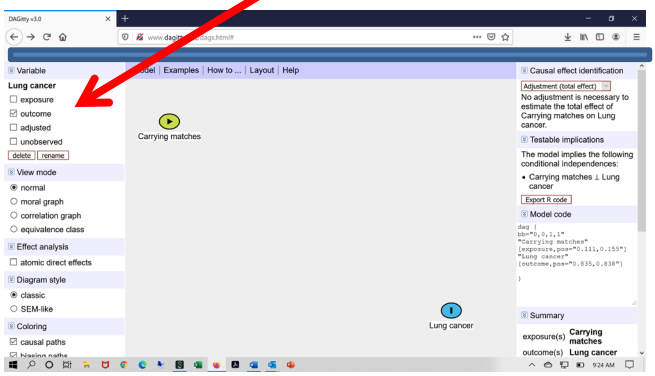


7) Enter the outcome variable

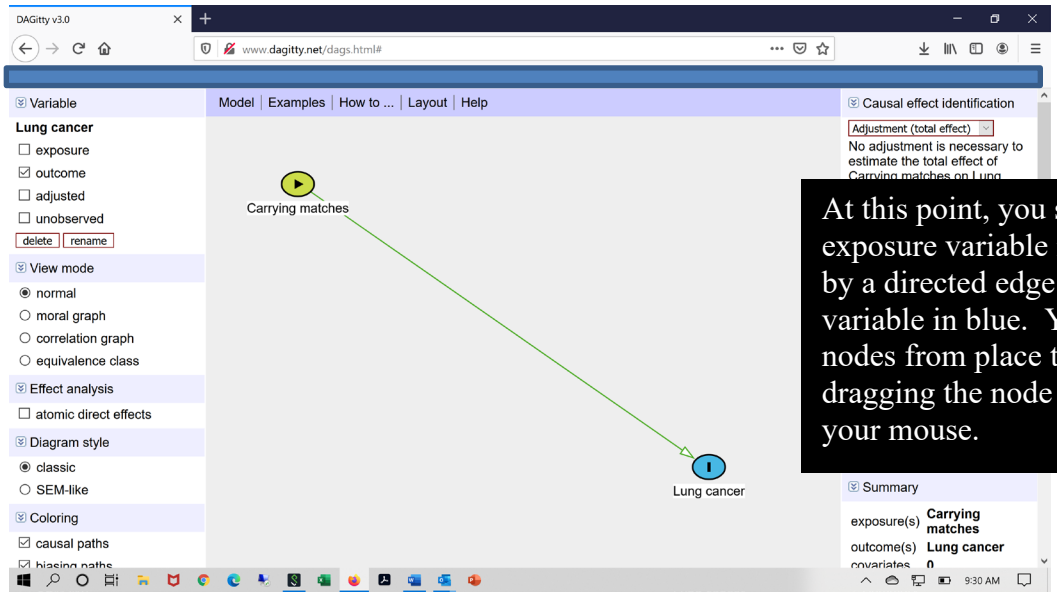


7a) Set your variable as the outcome: Click on your variable and mark "outcome"





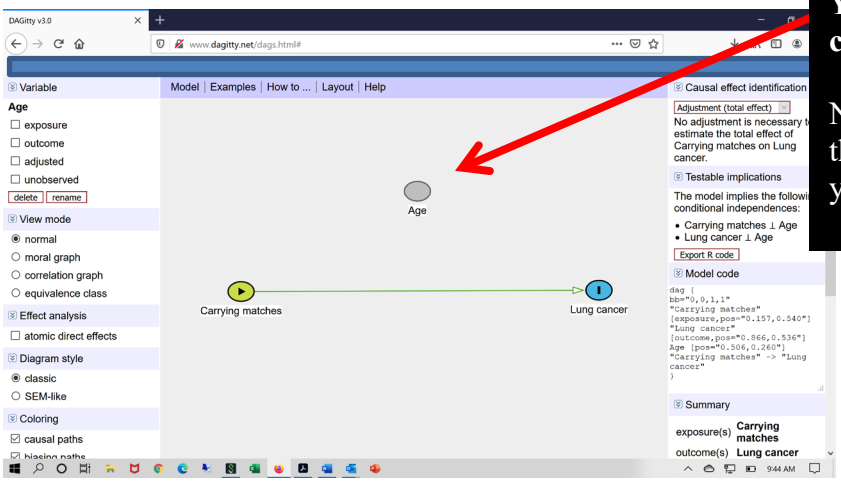
8) Connect your variables: click on your exposure and then, click on your outcome



At this point, you should see the exposure variable in green connected by a directed edge to the outcome variable in blue. You can move the nodes from place to place by simply dragging the node on the screen with your mouse.

9) <u>Adding other nodes and edges</u>:

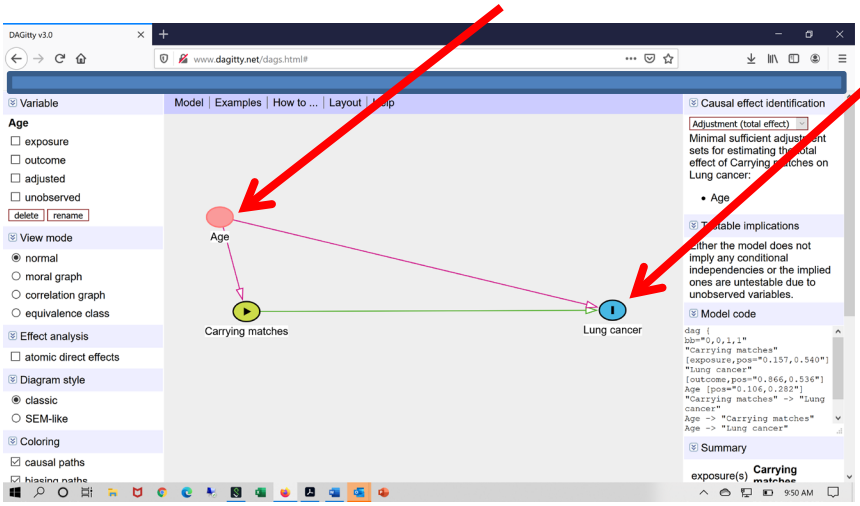
- **NEW NODE: Click anywhere in blank space and enter the variable name for your new node**



Your new node will appear on the canvas.

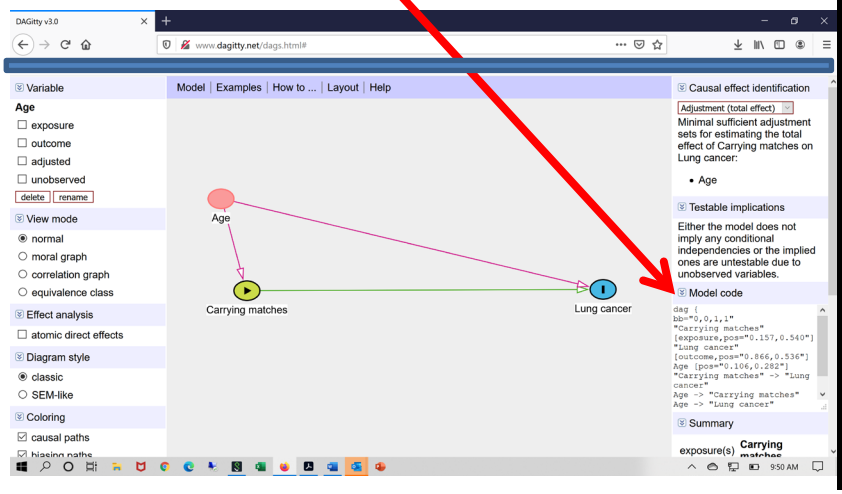
NOTE: at any time, you can reformat the DAG by clicking on a node with your mouse and moving it around.

- **NEW EDGE: Click on your starting node and then, click on the end node**

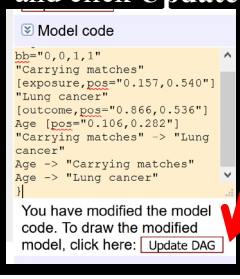


9) Saving a DAG: 2 options

OPTION 1 **Copy the Model code and paste the "code" in a document (e.g., MS Word) to save it.**

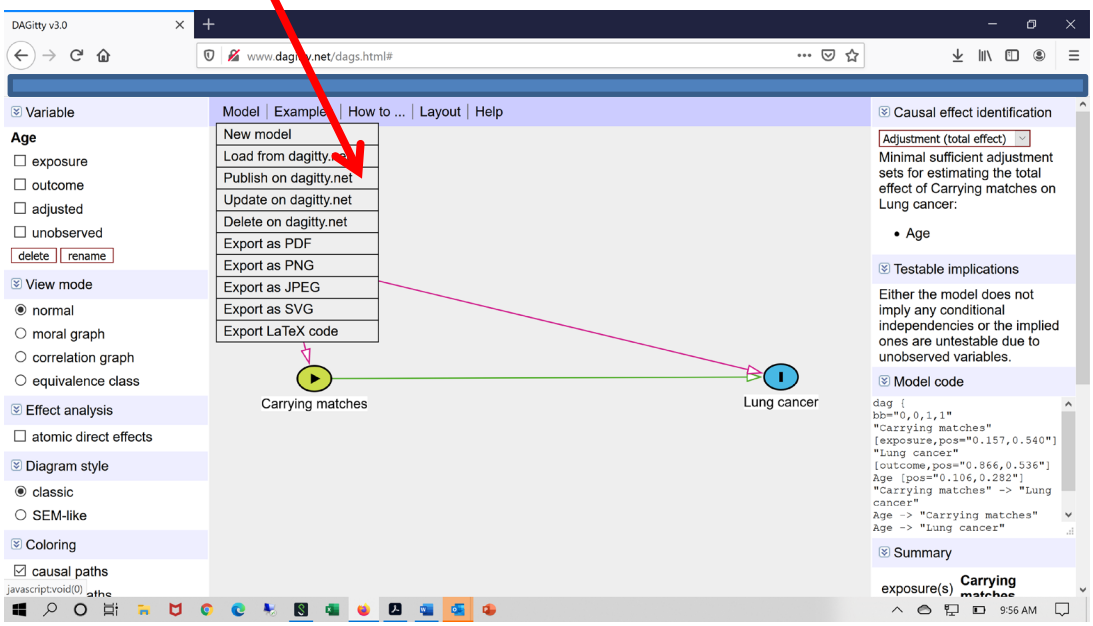


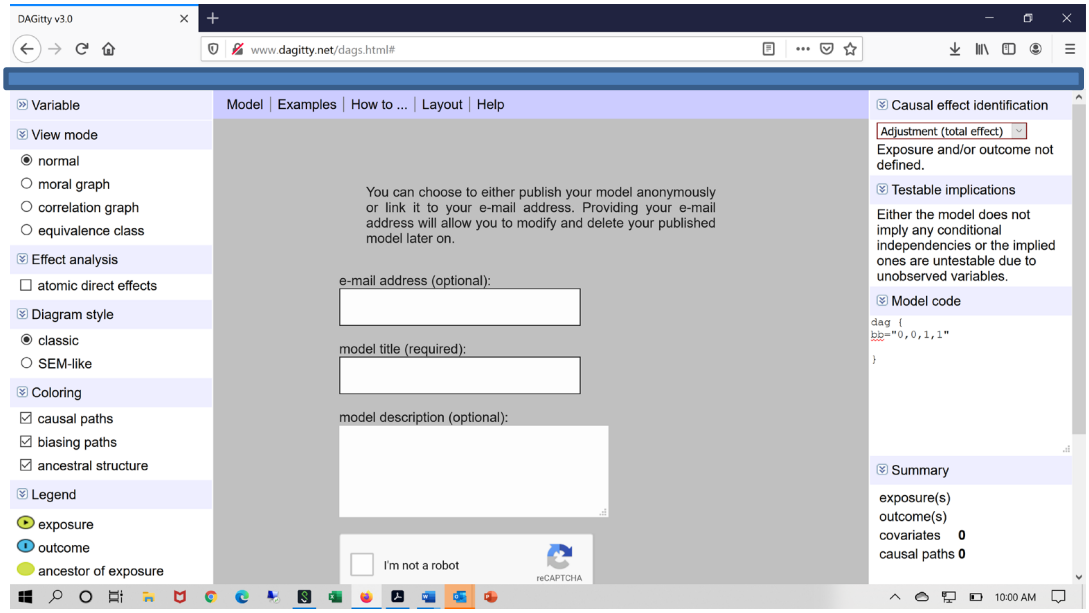
LATER: to resurrect your saved DAG, open a new **DAGitty.net** window and paste the saved "code" into the **Model code** box (i.e., replace the sample text in the box with your "text data") and click **Update DAG**.



OPTION 2 **Click on Model/Publish on Dagitty.net, then name your DAG (model title)**

Optional: Link it to your e-mail address. Providing your e-mail address will allow you to modify and delete your published model later on.





Write down/save the URL pathway (e.g., dagitty.net/mLOUxP). This is saving the DAG on the Dagitty.net server. *We have every reason to believe that this is secure, but if you have a highly confidential DAG you might want to be cautious.*

To later resurrect your saved DAG: click on **Model/Load from Dagitty.net** and enter your URL.

10) Saving your DAG as an image file/Printing a DAG

- **Click on Model**
- **Export as a PDF, png, jpeg, svg**

  Be aware of the default folder where your browser typically saves downloads.