Cochrane Library

www.thecochranelibrary.com

Quick Reference Guide

What is the Cochrane Library?

It is a collection of databases covering evidence-based healthcare, containing information in the form of systematic reviews or meta-analyses, randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and clinical answers.

The main databases are:

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)
This contains full-text systematic reviews by the Cochrane Collaboration.

There is a separate collection of Cochrane Protocols that describe the proposed approach for a systematic review.

Cochrane Controlled Register of Trials (CENTRAL)
This provides references, and often abstracts, of randomised and quasi-randomised controlled trials published in healthcare journals and some unpublished trials. Many of the trials indexed here are also indexed in Medline or EMBASE.

Cochrane Clinical Answers
These provide easily digestible, clinically-focused entry points to rigorous research from Cochrane Reviews. They are designed to be actionable and to inform point-of-care decision-making.

When doing a search, all the databases are searched.

How can I access it?

Access the Cochrane Library at **www.thecochranelibrary.com**

Are there other alternatives?

If you're looking for systematic reviews or meta-analyses, you may need to search other resources since only Cochrane reviews are included. For published systematic reviews try:
- the healthcare databases (Medline, Embase, Cinahl, Psychinfo) at https://hdas.nice.org.uk/
- TRIP database www.tripdatabase.com,
- PEDro (physiotherapy) www.pedro.org.au
- OTseeker (occupational therapy) www.otseeker.com

Or:
- Prospero www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/

for unpublished or ongoing systematic reviews or meta-analyses.

How do I search Cochrane?

You can use the main search box on the home page to carry out a simple search.

For best results, use a few keywords from your search question.

For example, if your question is 'Is physiotherapy effective in low back pain?' your search query could be:

Enter your keywords and click on the magnifying glass icon or press 'enter' to begin.
Note that it searches for items that contain **all** the words you type (by treating searches as '**and**' searches by default). If you want to search for synonyms, put brackets around and '**or**' between each word for example:

How are the results displayed?

Results are shown grouped by database and ordered by relevancy (this can be changed, for example to date order).

Click on the name of a database section to see the results for that section and click a title for more information.

How can I view the full text of an item?

Cochrane Reviews and Clinical Answers are available in full by clicking on the title link.

Cochrane Reviews can be downloaded as a PDF (usually as a summary, standard or full version)

For results from the Trials section, you won't be able to access the full-text directly, but you may still be able to view the item online if the library subscribes to the journal. To find out go to: journals.nice.org.uk and login with OpenAthens. (If you don't have an OpenAthens password please contact the library or follow the information on our webpages here: www.rjah.nhs.uk/library/athens

If full-text access is not available, you can request a copy from the library at www.rjah.nhs.uk/Surveys/Library-Article-Request.aspx

How can I do advanced searching?

Click on the link to 'Advanced search' below the search box.

The advanced search option allows you to build complex searches using Boolean (And, Or, Not), to use MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) thesaurus terms, to specify the field(s) you wish to search, to view your search history, and more.

We recommend using MeSH Searches for the most accurate search results. Please ask a librarian if you'd like a demonstration of how to use the advanced and MeSH searching features.