

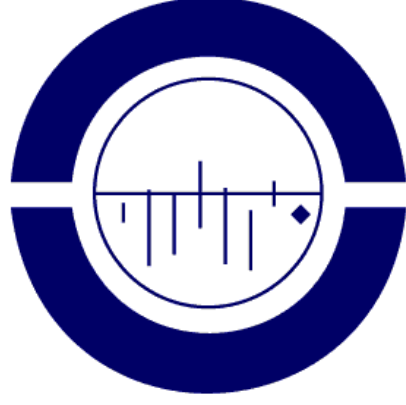


Want to know more?

Read the Newcomers' Guide (www.cochrane.org/docs/newcomersguide.htm); then contact your nearest Cochrane Centre (www.cochrane.org/contact), or The Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat: Tel +44 (0)1865 310138; Fax +44 (0)1865 316023; E-mail secretariat@cochrane.org.

Obtaining *The Cochrane Library*

You don't have to help prepare Cochrane reviews to want to make sure that your treatment is evidence-based. Visit *The Cochrane Library* (www.thecochranelibrary.com) to see Cochrane reviews of the effectiveness of thousands of healthcare interventions. Abstracts and summaries of reviews can be viewed online at no cost. In some countries access to the full reviews is free, thanks to national licences. Elsewhere it is subscription-based, or pay-per-view. *The Cochrane Library* is published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd (www3.interscience.wiley.com).



**THE COCHRANE
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**Providing up to date evidence
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*Our vision is that healthcare decision-making
around the world will be informed by high quality,
timely research evidence, and that
The Cochrane Collaboration will play a pivotal role
in the production and dissemination of this evidence
across all areas of health care*

The Cochrane Library

The background

The Cochrane Collaboration and its output have grown rapidly since the organisation was established in 1993. The first issue of the *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)*, the main product of the Collaboration, was published at the beginning of 1995, and included 36 Cochrane reviews. There were 500 Cochrane reviews in 1999, and CDSR now contains the full text of more than 2000 Cochrane reviews, each of which will be kept up to date as new evidence accumulates.

There are also 1500 published protocols for reviews in progress. These protocols set out how each review will be done, and provide an explicit description of its objectives, and the methods to be used.

Hundreds of newly completed reviews and protocols are added to the *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* each year. In addition, existing reviews are updated as new information becomes available, some so substantially that they can be considered to be the equivalent of new reviews.

The Cochrane Library

The Cochrane Library is available on the Internet and on CD-ROM published by John Wiley and Sons Limited, and is available without charge in some countries thanks to national licences. Elsewhere it is subscription based, or pay-per-view.

Free access to Internet users in Latin America and the Caribbean Region is available through BIREME. Dissemination of information to low- and middle-income countries is a priority for The Cochrane Collaboration, with some mechanisms in place and others under development to encourage access, free at the point of use, in these countries.

These initiatives include partnerships with INASP and HINARI. They also include the *Reproductive Health Library (RHL)*, in English and Spanish, which is prepared by the World Health Organization and published by Update Software Limited. The World Health Organization distributes the *RHL* on CD-ROM free to 22,000 health workers in low- and middle-income countries, and Update Software provides free internet access to users in those countries. The *RHL* is available by subscription in high-income countries.

La Biblioteca Cochrane Plus (BCP) is the first version of *The Cochrane Library* to be published in a language other than English. This version, produced by Update Software Ltd and Infoglobal Suport SL, contains translations of the complete text of Cochrane Reviews, and six Spanish

language databases relevant to people working in evidence-based health care. *BCP* also contains other databases in English taken from the current edition of *The Cochrane Library* to ensure that the most recent information is available to users.

Other databases within The Cochrane Library

The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, contains Cochrane reviews and protocols.

The Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects, assembled and maintained by the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination in York, UK, contains critical assessments and structured abstracts of other systematic reviews, conforming to explicit quality criteria.

The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL) contains bibliographic information on hundreds of thousands of studies, including those published in conference proceedings and many other sources not currently listed in other bibliographic databases.

The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews contains protocols and reviews of Cochrane methodological studies.

The Cochrane Methodology Register contains bibliographic information on articles and books on the science of reviewing research, and a prospective register of methodological studies. *The Cochrane Library* also contains links to a handbook on how to conduct a Cochrane review, and a glossary of terms.

The Cochrane Collaboration section in *The Cochrane Library* contains contact details and other information about Cochrane Review Groups and the other contributing groups within The Cochrane Collaboration.

The Future

The Cochrane Collaboration is striving to ensure that its work is sustainable. Even with thousands of Cochrane reviews underway, and results already available from more than 2000 of these, there is still a large amount of work to be done.

The latest estimate is that at least 10,000 Cochrane reviews are needed to cover all healthcare interventions that have already been investigated in controlled trials, and these reviews will need to be updated at the rate of 5000 per year.