



Cochrane
Library

Reference Guide



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Did you know?

Ten tips for getting the most out of the Cochrane Library

- 1. Discover the complete Cochrane Library in Spanish**
View, search, and discover content in Spanish by selecting the 'Español' option from the drop-down menu at the top of the homepage.
- 2. Search and read in your preferred language**
A new language filter on the search results page enables you to view Cochrane Reviews that have abstracts, summaries or other sections translated into one of 14 languages.
- 3. Find Cochrane Clinical Answers**
Use the basic search to discover Cochrane Clinical Answers related to any search topic.
- 4. Share a search**
Send a link to another user to let them run and view results of your search. Users who receive your search can send a shared link back adding their own comments and edits, or save the search.
- 5. Access CENTRAL from the homepage**
Just click the 'Trials' link in the top navigation bar to access the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL).
- 6. Easy access to commenting**
Submit and view comments on Cochrane Reviews, Protocols, and Editorials.
- 7. See the latest Cochrane Reviews at a glance**
Use the 'Highlighted Reviews' section and the 'View Current Issue' link for a quick overview of new and updated Cochrane Reviews.
- 8. Easily navigate across the whole collection in the Cochrane Library**
Use the search results display to view relevant records across the complete Cochrane Library, including Cochrane Reviews and Protocols, Trials, Editorials, Special Collections, Cochrane Clinical Answers, and references to other systematic reviews through Epistemonikos.
- 9. Get e-mail alerts for your saved searches**
You can name and save your searches in the 'Advanced Search' environment. Once they are saved, click 'View searches', then select 'e-mail alert' to be notified when new articles matching your search are added to the Cochrane Library.
- 10. Additional resources at your fingertips**
Click on 'Related content' for information about related guidelines, reviews, protocols, topics, and podcasts.

◆ The Cochrane Library publishes independent high-quality evidence to inform healthcare decision making.

If you have access through a site license, or national- or regional-access licences or programs, then sign in is not required for full text access. If you need to sign in, simply click the 'Sign In' button and use your existing e-mail address and password. There are also options to request a new password or register on the site. Signing in provides access to saved searches and enables the ability to set search alerts.



Institutional access to the Cochrane Library

For institutional access, click 'Sign In', then select 'Institutional Login'. This will bring up a searchable list of institutions for you to choose from.

You can also log in via OpenAthens or using a Wiley Online Library account.

Basic navigation

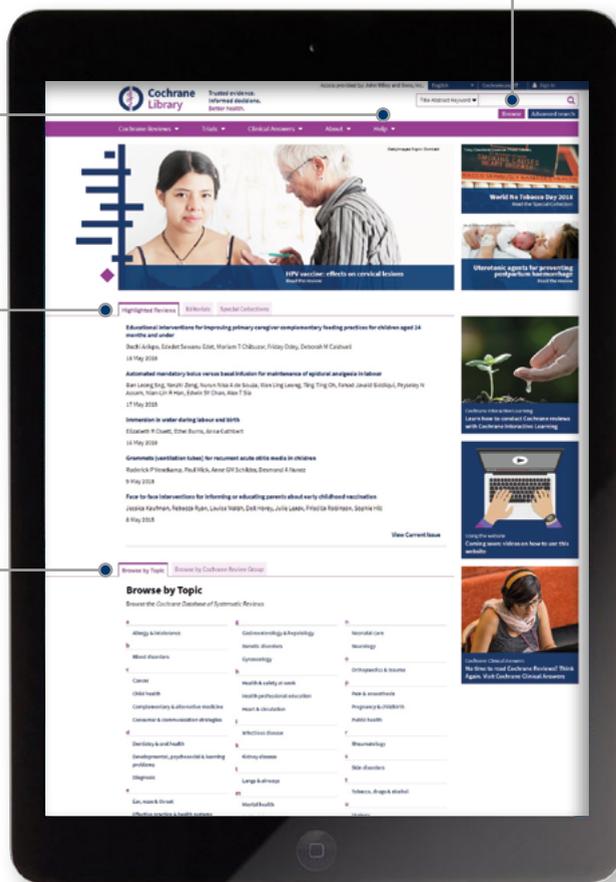
There are several options to browse and search the Cochrane Library.

Type a search term directly into the box, or select 'Advanced search' to create complex searches, access saved searches, or search by MeSH.

Get more information on how to use the Cochrane Library, including access to training materials.

Quick links to read Editorials, Highlighted Cochrane Reviews, or Special Collections.

Scroll down on the homepage to browse by topic or Cochrane Review Group.



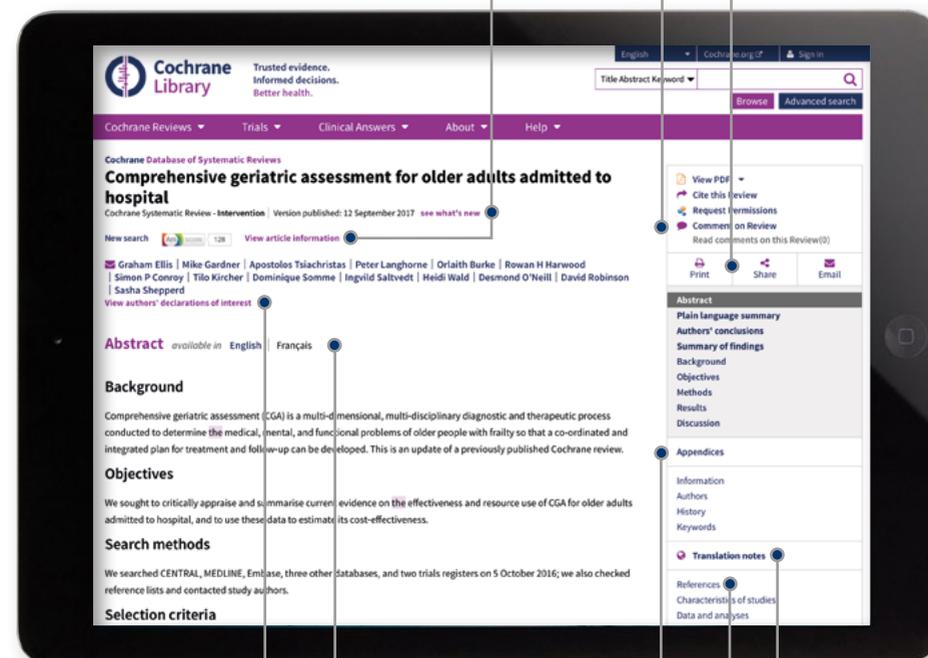
The advanced browse features allow you to filter Cochrane Systematic Reviews by various criteria:

- Date: filter by publication date
- Status: e.g. conclusions changed, new search
- Language: filter for reviews that contain sections translated into a particular language.
- Type: e.g. intervention, overview
- Topics: lists the topics relating to the search term.

Submit a comment about the Cochrane Review.

More information about the review, including article metrics, what's new, version history, and assigned MeSH headings, is available via these two links.

Easily print, share, and e-mail the Cochrane Review.



Quick access to authors' declarations of interest.

View additional material, i.e. search strategies, under Appendices.

Abstracts in other languages are listed, if available.

View the reference list for the Cochrane Review.

View the translation notes about the Cochrane Review.

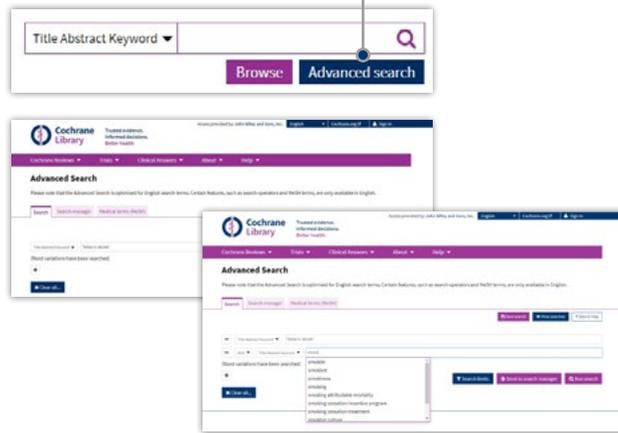
Advanced searching

Use more advanced tools for complex searches.

Select 'Advanced Search' to access additional tools for creating complex search strategies and to search using index terms (MeSH).

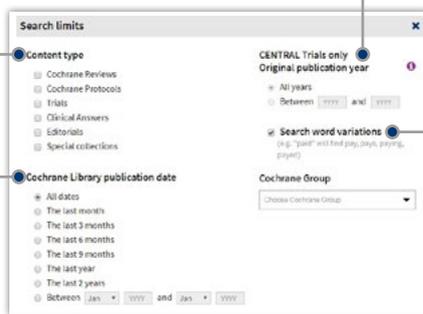
In the 'Search' tab, use the drop-down menu selection to easily limit searches to fields, such as 'Author' or 'Abstract'.

Supports common search syntax: Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT); proximity operators (NEAR, NEXT); and truncation (*, or ?).



Limit your search to a particular content type.

The search date limit applies to all Cochrane content types.



To limit to the original publication year, first select 'Trials' as a content type.

Word variations will be searched by default in the 'Search' tab, but can be turned off by unchecking the box.

Search manager

Add or remove lines from your search, including inserting a new line at the beginning.



Access your saved searches.

Use the search slideout to easily choose fields via menu selections.

Use the filter button to open the search limits module.

Access search help.

Use the MeSH slideout to perform a MeSH search directly within the Search manager.

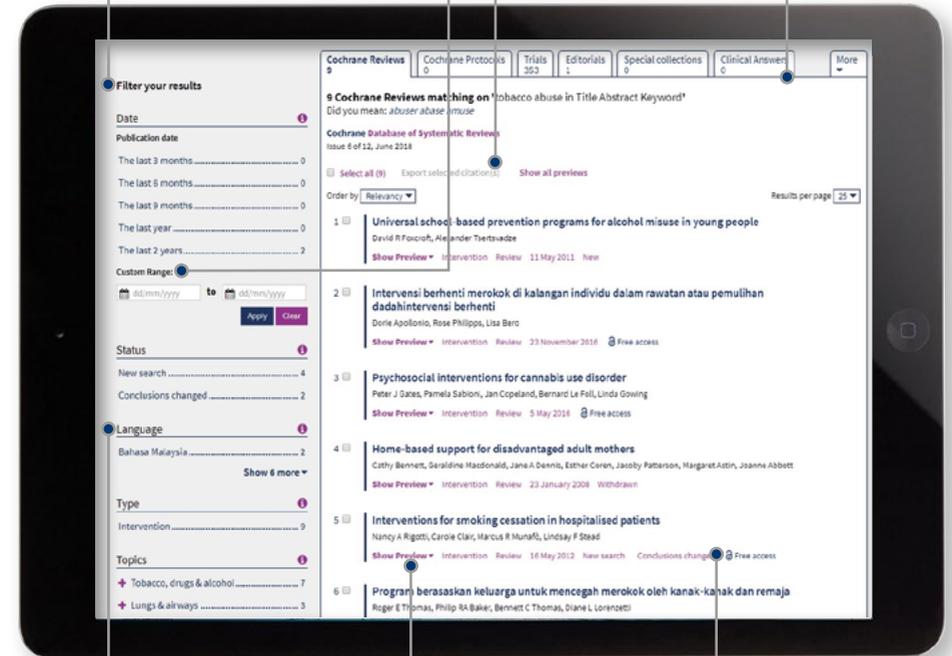
Search results

Easily filter your results to view the Cochrane Reviews you need.

Add a custom range to narrow your search period.

Select the Cochrane Reviews to easily export your citations.

New tabs make it clear and easy to identify where your search results have come from.



Easily filter by language.

Quickly view a preview to see relevancy to your research.

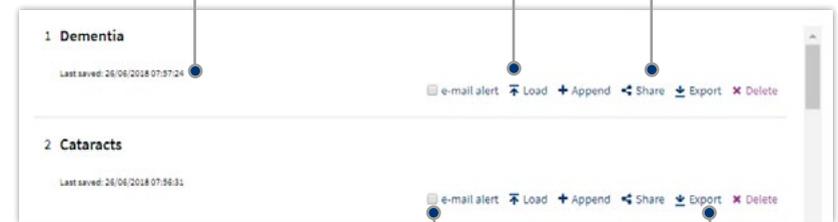
Quickly identify Open Access Cochrane Reviews.

Saved searches

View the order in which the most recent search was saved.

Load a saved search.

Share your saved search via an e-mail link.

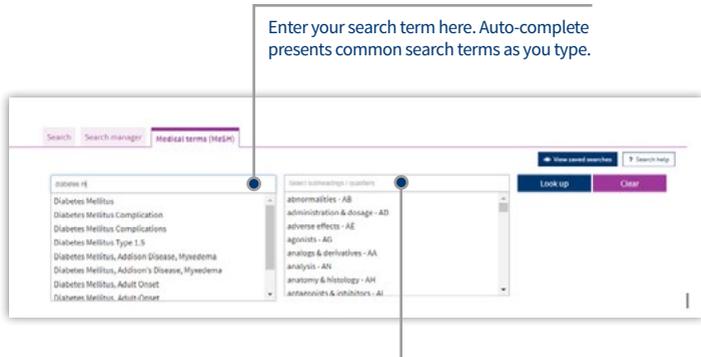


Click to be e-mailed when new articles are retrieved by your search.

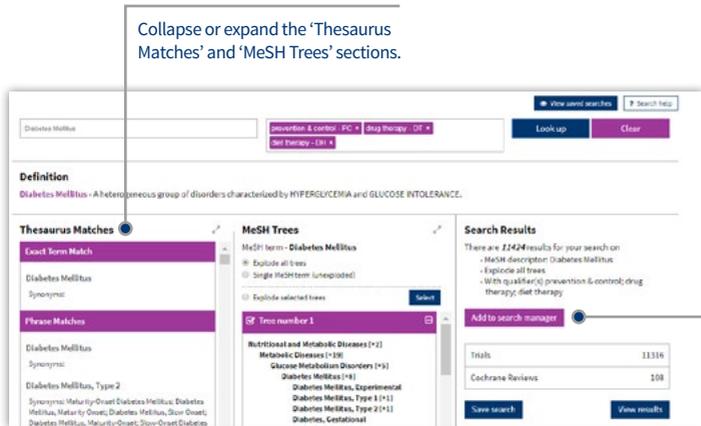
Use 'Export' for a print-friendly copy of your search.

MeSH searching

To reach the MeSH search page, simply click on the appropriate tab.



Use MeSH subheadings to limit your search. When a MeSH term is selected, only valid qualifiers for that term will appear in the dropdown.



MeSH is the U.S. National Library of Medicine's controlled vocabulary used for indexing articles for MEDLINE and PubMed. MeSH terminology provides a consistent way of retrieving information that may use different terminology for the same concepts (see www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed).

Keywords drawn from the MeSH Thesaurus published by the U.S. National Library of Medicine have been attached to many records in the Cochrane Library.

What sources in the Cochrane Library have MeSH indexing

Cochrane Reviews	Fully indexed. New reviews are indexed within six months of being published.
Cochrane Protocols	No MeSH indexing.
Trials	PubMed articles: fully indexed. EMBASE and Handsearch: no MeSH indexing.
Cochrane Clinical Answers	No MeSH indexing.

Search syntax

How to search for	Example	Use
Automatic stemming and term variations	<i>Treat</i> finds <i>treat</i> , <i>treats</i> , <i>treated</i> and <i>treating</i> but not <i>treatment</i>	The search system performs automatic stemming of the term(s) by searching all common variants of a term based on its part of speech, eliminating the need for users to manually type these common variants. Automatic stemming can be turned on and off using the limits selection box.
Single term	Cloning	Searches for a specific term in the article or selected fields.
Multiple words	Diabetes mellitus	If no quotes are used, search will 'AND' terms and find articles or selected fields with both terms.
Phrase searching	"Diabetes mellitus"	Use double quotation marks to find exact phrases. This search finds <i>diabetes mellitus</i> in the article or selected fields.
Wildcard (or truncation; word root must be at least 3 characters)	transplant*	Use an asterisk (*) to match all terms beginning with a word root. <i>transplant*</i> finds <i>transplant</i> , <i>transplants</i> , <i>transplanting</i> , <i>transplantation</i> , and <i>transplantable</i> .
	glycemia	Use an asterisk () at the beginning of a word to match terms with the same suffix. <i>*glycemia</i> matches <i>hyperglycemia</i> or <i>hypoglycemia</i> .
	leuk*mia	Use an asterisk to match multiple characters within a word. <i>leuk*mia</i> finds <i>leukemia</i> and <i>leukaemia</i> .
	wom?n	Use a question mark (?) to match a single character within a word. <i>wom?n</i> finds <i>women</i> or <i>woman</i> .
	system?	Use a question mark (?) to match all terms with that word root and EXACTLY 1 character. <i>System?</i> finds <i>systems</i> but not <i>system</i> , <i>systematic</i> or <i>systemic</i> .
Searching with field labels	"lung cancer":ti (hearing next aid*) :kw smith:au (cancer near lung) :ti,ab,kw	In the 'Search manager' tab, limit to specific fields using the following field labels: :ti (title) :ab (abstract) :kw (Keywords) :au (author) :so (source) :pt (Publication Type) :tb (tables) :doi (digital object identifier [DOI]) :an (accession number) If NO field label is used, 'All text' will be searched. To search multiple fields, separate field labels using commas (:ti,ab,kw).
Logical operators in phrases	breastfeeding AND pre-term; smoking OR tobacco	To find phrases which contain a logical operator (AND, OR, NOT).

Support for logical (Boolean) operators

The following operators can be used via the pull-down boxes in the search tab, or typed directly into the search boxes in either the search or 'Search manager' tabs.

Operator	Example	Use
AND	leg AND ulcer	Both terms must appear in the article or selected field(s).
OR	heart OR cardiac	At least one of the terms must appear in the article or selected field(s).
NOT	aids NOT hearing	The first word must appear but the second word cannot appear in the article or selected field(s).
Order of precedence	kidney OR renal AND dialysis	If your search contains more than one logical operator, the system will execute the search in the following order: All NOT operations first, all AND operations second, all OR operations last. For better precision, use parentheses.
Grouping (or parentheses)	(kidney OR renal) AND dialysis	Default precedence order can be changed by using parentheses () to explicitly group searches using logical operators.
Combining searches	#1 OR #2 OR #3 (#1 OR #2) AND #3 {AND #1-#4} {OR #1-4,#7,#9}	Combine results from multiple search lines into a combined result set. Supports Boolean (AND, OR, NOT) and nesting. Precedence rules are applied if not explicitly given through parentheses. Searches can also be combined using a range of lines, {AND #1-#4}. Range searching can be used with 'AND' or 'OR' operators and must be enclosed in {}.
Proximity	NEAR cancer NEAR lung	Terms can appear in either order. Finds <i>lung cancer</i> AND <i>cancer of the lung</i> NEAR automatically defaults to near/6 (within 6 words).
	NEAR/x cancer NEAR/2 lung	Terms can appear in either order. User can decide number of terms using the NEAR/x command where x = the maximum number of words between search terms.
	NEXT lung NEXT cancer hearing NEXT aid*	Terms must appear in order keyed and assumes terms are next to each other. <i>lung NEXT cancer</i> finds <i>lung cancer</i> but not <i>cancer of the lung</i> . Does not support the /x parameter. Supports the use of wildcards.

Entering a MeSH search directly in Search manager

Users familiar with MeSH headings can directly enter a MeSH term using the Search manager tab. The syntax supports the searching of one or more MeSH terms, turning on and off term explosion, applying a subheading, and searching using a major concept only.

MeSH search	Syntax	Notes
BASIC EXAMPLE Specify a MeSH heading	[mh cholesteatoma] [mh "diabetes mellitus"]	If searching a phrase, put the term in quotes.
EXPLODE A TERM Specifying that all trees for MeSH heading should be exploded	[mh cholesteatoma]	Term explosion occurs by default.
SEARCH A TERM WITHOUT EXPLOSION Specifying trees for MeSH heading should not be exploded	[mh^cholesteatoma]	Use ^ in front of the term to turn off term explosion.
LIMIT BY QUALIFIERS (with term explosion) Specifying a MeSH heading with one or more qualifiers (with explosion)	[mh "cholesteatoma, middle ear"/BL,CO]	Use / and the two-letter qualifier abbreviation to limit by one or more qualifiers. This example limits the term to qualifiers BL (Blood) or CO (Complications).
LIMIT BY QUALIFIERS (without term explosion) Specifying a MeSH heading with one or more qualifiers (without explosion)	[mh^"cholesteatoma, middle ear"/BL,CO]	Use / and the two-letter qualifier abbreviation to limit by one or more qualifiers. Qualifiers must be keyed in upper case. This example limits the term to qualifiers BL (Blood) or CO (Complications).
SPECIFYING A QUALIFIER ONLY Search for any articles using a specific qualifier	[mh/DT]	If qualifiers are specified without a MeSH term, all articles where this qualifier appears will be found. This example finds all articles indexed with a qualifier DT (Drug Therapy).
LIMIT BY MAJOR CONCEPT Specifying a MeSH heading as a major topic of an article	[mh human[mj]/GE,GD]	[mj] is used to limit your search to 'major concepts' only.

In summary:

- [mh] is used to indicate the search term/string contains a MeSH heading
- Phrases must be placed in double quotation marks, e.g. [mh "cholesteatoma, middle ear"]
- ^ can be placed before the MeSH heading to turn explosion off.

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