



LEARN THE BASICS OF SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

In the News

Co-publishing agreement with CMAJ

Canadian physicians will soon have easier access to relevant Cochrane reviews. The Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ) and the publishers of *The Cochrane Library*, John Wiley & Sons, have agreed to the simultaneous release of selected Cochrane reviews. In a more readable format, CMAJ will publish a 3000 word version of selected Cochrane systematic reviews on the publication date of the full review in *The Cochrane Library*.

Cochrane Library Available to All Nova Scotians

All residents of Nova Scotia can now access *The Cochrane Library* for free through public libraries and remotely through their local library web site with a valid library card. Although health practitioners in Nova Scotia have had access to *The Cochrane Library* since 2005, it was through a cumbersome password system. Funding was provided by the members of the Atlantic Health Knowledge Partnership who worked with the Nova Scotia Provincial Library to realize this access.

<https://sapps.ednet.ns.ca/cochranelogin/index2.html>

For more information contact Patrick Ellis at pellis@dal.ca

New RSS Feed – Cochrane Connecting Today...

Keep Cochrane front and centre by subscribing to Cochrane Connecting Today, a new RSS feed from the Canadian Cochrane Centre! Receive highlights of Cochrane reviews related to current events and health promotion days. View the news and sign up on our What's New page at <http://www.ccn.cochrane.org/en/news.html>.

Cochrane for Practice

The Health of Older People (HOP) Project

Current best evidence from Cochrane systematic reviews which relate to the health care of older people is now available as a 'one stop shop' thanks to the work of a group of researchers in Glasgow. A searchable database provides a concise account of the evidence on common health problems (i.e., continence, falls etc.) and different models of service organization (i.e., acute care, long-term) related to older people.

Visit www.effectiveolderpeoplecare.org

Does evidence-based medicine and systematic reviews baffle you like science classes did? Demystify these topics by taking the new online course created by the United States Cochrane Center as part of a project undertaken by Consumers United for Evidence-based Healthcare (CUE). It is designed to help the lay person understand the fundamentals of evidence-based healthcare concepts and skills. Registration is offered monthly and participants have three months to complete the course and must commit to completing all evaluations. For more details please click [here](#).

StrokEngine

StrokEngine is a free, evidence-based website about stroke rehabilitation interventions with information tailored for stroke patients and loved ones, clinicians, and policy makers. Established by McGill University, researchers gather evidence from multiple sources, including Cochrane reviews, and update it every six months.

www.medicine.mcgill.ca/strokengine

An e-learning module is also available for clinicians at

<http://elearning.strokengine.org/>.

P.E.A.R.L.S. for Practitioners

Designed for practitioners, a Cochrane P.E.A.R.L.S. (practical evidence about real life situations) is a one page summary of a Cochrane Review relevant to primary care. The Cochrane Primary Care Field sends out two P.E.A.R.L.S. every two weeks at no charge. To subscribe to P.E.A.R.L.S, email Bruce Arroll at b.arroll@auckland.ac.nz.

Cochrane Library Spotlight - Issue 3 2007

Child Health

Interventions for the interruption or reduction of the spread of respiratory viruses

Mother's advice about washing your hands is still a tried and true practice. A Cochrane review has found that good hand-washing with normal soap and water are effective ways to contain respiratory virus infections in young children. Although respiratory viruses usually only cause minor disease such as colds, they can cause epidemics.

Public Health

Abstinence-only programs for HIV infection prevention in high-income countries

Programs promoting abstinence as the only means of preventing sexual acquisition of HIV are not effective in decreasing or worsening HIV risk among American youth. These programs consistently had no effect on behaviours such as condom use that would prevent the spread of HIV.

Dietary advice for reducing cardiovascular risk

How important is diet in reducing the chances of getting cardiovascular disease and cancer? Could a simple change in eating habits affect a person's risk? Evidence shows that dietary advice from a health practitioner can moderately reduce salt and fat intake and increase the intake of fruit, vegetables, and fibre.

Workplace Health

Surgical treatment options for carpal tunnel syndrome

Several surgical treatment options are available for the common disorder, carpal tunnel syndrome. Studies reviewed show that none of the alternatives to the standard procedure, called open carpal tunnel release, seem to relieve symptoms in the short- or long-term. People who have a special type of operation (endoscopic carpal tunnel release) may return to their work or daily activities about one week earlier.

Senior's Health

Electromechanical-assisted training for walking after stroke

Stroke patients are often required to use a walking aid during rehabilitation. Electromechanical and robotic-assisted gait training devices are sometimes used to help improve a patient's walk. This review found that using these devices together with physiotherapy increases the chances of stroke patients being able to walk independently in comparison to using no device at all.

Exercise for improving balance in older people

The risk of falling is great among older adults and can often reduce independence or lead to illness or early death. The results of this review identify that exercises such as those that involve walking, balance, co-ordination and muscle strength have the most impact on a senior's balance; however it is unknown how long these effects last.

Women's Health

Chinese herbal medicine for primary dysmenorrhoea

There is promising evidence that Chinese herbal medicine may help relieve painful menstrual cramps. Compared to conventional medicine such as NSAIDs and the oral contraceptive pill, acupuncture and heat compression, Chinese herbal medicine reduced pain, overall symptoms and the use of additional medication.

Amniotomy for shortening spontaneous labour

Don't 'break the waters' during labour without good clinical reason, concludes this Cochrane review. Amniotomy, also known as breaking the waters, did not shorten the first stage of labour or affect a woman's satisfaction with her childbirth experience and it may increase the chance of delivery by cesarean section.

Enemas during labour

The evidence does not support routinely using enemas during labour. Giving women enemas during labour does not shorten labour or decrease the risk of infection to mother or baby. Consequently this practice should be discouraged

What's Ahead

The Canadian Cochrane Symposium 2008

Big Sky: New Horizons for Systematic Reviews in Health Care

6-7 March 2008

Sutton Place Hotel, Edmonton Alberta

Abstract deadline: 30 November 2007

Register for pre-symposium workshops: systematic review author training, RevMan 5 training. Introductory and critical appraisal workshops for consumers will be offered during the Symposium.

Contact: Krystal Harvey (krystal.harvey@ualberta.ca)

www.ccs2008.ca

The Canadian Cochrane Network and Centre is one of 12 independent, not-for-profit Cochrane Centres worldwide.

Over 1200 people in Canada are Cochrane members who contribute to systematic reviews of treatments used in health care. Systematic reviews are a reliable source of evidence to help people make well-informed decisions about health care.

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