The Cochrane Library

The Cochrane Library is a collection of three separate databases:

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)
Is the main resource, it contains the full text of all the Cochrane reviews.

Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trails (CENTRAL)
Are reports of randomized and quasi-randomised controlled trials.

Cochrane Clinical Answers
Provides a readable, digestible, clinically-focused entry point to rigorous research from Cochrane Reviews.

Accessing the Cochrane Library

Open an internet browser and go to https://www.cochranelibrary.com/
Although freely available The Cochrane Library can be accessed via Library Search.
For more information about the Cochrane Library databases click About then click About the Cochrane Library.

Searching

To find information on asthma in the Cochrane Library.
In the Search box, type asthma and press enter.

Tip for Case and Punctuality Sensitivity

Searching is not case sensitive however hyphens and inverted commas are important and must be included in the search term. For the search to find results with them in, e.g. Parkinson’s with an apostrophe finds many more results than Parkinsons without an apostrophe.

The database shows the results in tabs across the top starting with Cochrane Reviews. There are 277 results for your search on asthma in the record title, abstract and keywords in Cochrane Reviews. You can click on the other tabs to view their results. Cochrane Reviews are divided into reviews that are completed and protocols that are still in progress.
Question 1
How many Cochrane protocols have the word asthma in the title, abstract or keyword?
Answer:

Tip for Sorting Results
By clicking the Order by drop-down box, results can be sorted alphabetically, by relevance or by date.

Viewing Records
Change the Order by option to Title A-Z
Have a look at the review, Acupuncture for chronic asthma, by clicking the title.

Each Cochrane review includes details of how you might cite it appropriately if you use it in your work. Click on, Cite this review, on the right hand side. Basically there is author, title, then ‘Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews’ which functions like a journal title and the year. There may be an issue number, and there is an article number that could be used instead of a pages numbers.

Question 2
What is the surname of the second author of the review?
Answer:

Close the citation information box. To read the review scroll down the page or use the links on the right to navigate to particular sections.

View the Methods section

Question 3
What age were the patients who participated in the studies included in the review?
Answer:
From the links on the right click View PDF and click Full, Standard or Summary. This will open either the complete review, main elements or abstract which can then be downloaded and saved.

Close the internet browser tab for this review and return to your results.

**Combining Searches using Advanced Search**

Finding information on the most effective implants for use in the treatment of hip fractures.

Click on Advanced Search underneath the search box.

Click on Search manager.

In the Search box begin with your first subject, type **implant** and press enter.

Click on the plus sign.

In the second search box type hip next fracture (using 'next' means Cochrane will find results where 'hip' (or 'hips') is followed immediately by 'fracture' (or 'fractures'))

Again click on the plus sign.

In the third box type #1 and #2.

**Tip for Combining Searches**

The usual rules apply:

'#4 OR #6' will retrieve documents found in EITHER of the searches

'#4 AND #6' will retrieve documents which are specifically found in BOTH of the searches

'#4 NOT #6' will retrieve documents found by search #4 but will remove documents which were also found in search #6

The results of the combines searches will appear in the blue box, click on the number in the box to view the results.

With the Cochrane Reviews results look at the complete review called, Extramedullary fixation implants and external fixators for extracapsular hip fractures.
Question 4
From the ‘Authors’ Conclusions – Implications for practice’, is there enough evidence to determine if the Pugh nail produces comparable or superior results to that of the sliding hip screw (SHS)?
Answer:

Expanding your search
You can expand your search using MeSH terms, as used in Medline.

Click on Medical terms (MeSH).
In the Search type, pressure sore and click look up.
The term is matched to ‘Pressure Ulcer’. A definition is shown, along with three additional columns:
1. Thesaurus matches - will show any other potential term matches.
2. MeSH trees - provides options for exploding.
3. Search results - previews the results.
Pressure Ulcer has no narrower terms, so exploding is irrelevant.
Click Add to search manager.
Click the Medical Terms (MeSH) tab again or use the MeSH option in search manager.
Type: mattress and click Lookup.
This matches to ‘Beds’. This seems relevant, but the narrower term ‘Stretcher’ is less so, so select Single MeSH term (unexploded) and click Select.
Then click Add to Search Manager or Click Add/Edit search line.
In search manager combine with AND e.g. #3 and #4.
Click on the number in the box to view the results. From the Cochrane Reviews, look at, Support surfaces for pressure ulcer prevention.

Question 5
What are the two primary outcome measures for the randomised controlled trials included in this review? (Hint: ‘Methods - Types of outcome measures’ section)?
Answer:
Question 6

Ideally, should patients at high risk of developing pressure sores be placed on standard foam mattresses? (Hint: 'Authors' Conclusions' section)?

Answer:

More searching techniques

Suppose you were interested in investigating the effectiveness of hand-washing as a method of infection prevention. What search terms do you think would be effective?

Try searching in (Title, Abstract, Keywords) for: (handwash* OR (hand near/1 wash*)) and infect*

Tip for What this search is doing

- Singulars/plurals searching is automatic and with this use of * and next, all possibilities should be covered:
- Handwash* will find 'handwash', 'handwashes', 'handwashing' etc.
- Using 'near/1' will find 'hand' beside (either before or after) 'wash*' thus locating 'hand washes', 'hand washing', 'washing hands' etc. Combining both options with 'OR' should cover all variations.
- Adding 'infect*' with AND means also the results need to mention 'infect', 'infects', 'infection' etc
- Alternatively, you could have considered using MeSH terms.

View the results of the combination and see if it has located useful results.

Question 7

How many Cochrane reviews has this search located?

Answer:

Tip for The Cochrane Library and Endnote

1. To export a Cochrane record to EndNote, click Cite this Review for the article when in the review (or select it and click Export Selected from the results display).
2. From the Copy or download citation option select EndNote, tick include abstract box if you want it and click Download.
3. Open the download, if you have your EndNote Library open the reference should go straight into your Library.
4. If you save the file, Open EndNote then select File, Import, File, select your saved file and set, Cochrane Library (Wiley), as your Import Option, you may need to view 'Other Filters' to select this.
5. The reference should import. It may import as an Electronic Article reference, but it is advisable to change this to Journal Article.

Searching by Collaborative Review Group
To investigate reviews produced by the Cochrane Multiple Sclerosis Group.
Click the Browse tab underneath the search box.
Choose to Browse Cochrane Reviews By Review group.
Click Multiple Sclerosis and Rare Diseases of the CNS Group

Questions 8
How many protocols are this group working on at present?

Answer:

Try a search of your own
Think of a problem, form this into a clinical question:
• The patient/condition
• Intervention
• Comparator
• Outcomes
Consider your search terms and any limits you want to use

Now do the search.

Was it successful - did you find useful guidance on the topic?
If not, consider if you can alter your search and try again!

However, remember there simply may not be a Cochrane Review available for the topic you are interested in.

This concludes the tutorial and the answers to the questions are below.

**Answers:**

Question 1
Question 2
Question 3
Question 4
Question 5
Question 6
Question 7
Question 8

Update 21/08/19. MJR