**Cochrane Library**

**Background & coverage**
A collection of databases that contain high-quality, independent evidence to inform healthcare decision-making. It provides sources of reliable information: systematic reviews abstracts, technology assessments, economic evaluations, and individual clinical trials.

**Best Clinical Use**
Best for questions of therapy. Can confirm major, practice-changing information, and provides highest quality systematic review and critical appraisal in a very structured format. Accessible even when no access to UWA Library due to free access within Australia.

**Positives**
- Stringent quality control on relevance of topics, statistical synthesis, and critical appraisal
- Plain language summaries of findings are very accessible
- Open access
- Review dates are clearly shown
- Includes topics relevant to allied health disciplines and nursing

**Negatives**
- Reviews are very long and it may be time consuming to find desired information
- Some knowledge of forest plots and meta-analysis is an advantage for the user
- Reviews may be some years out of date
- Questions other than therapy may be difficult to answer
- Does not provide clinical guidance where randomized controlled trials are not available

**Search Tips and Tools:**

**MeSH Search**
After entering a MeSH term you will be taken to the MeSH Trees. Select the terms you are interested in.

You can also search for definitions of your MeSH term.

If your term is not a MeSH term you will be taken to the thesaurus to choose an appropriate MeSH term.

Explode the one or multiple Trees you want to view results from. Or, search by your entered term only.

**Searching: Truncation & wildcards**
- ? finds suffix variations of a single character, e.g. disease? finds disease but not diseases, etc.
- * finds suffix variations of two or more characters, e.g. diseases* finds diseases, etc but not disease.

NEAR/# finds terms that appear next to each other, e.g. antidepressant NEAR/10 narcolepsy finds narcolepsy within 10 words of antidepressant.

NEXT finds terms next to each other and " " searches exact phrases, e.g. cholera NEXT treatment and "cholera treatment" finds the phrase cholera treatment.

A comma separating words applies the OR operator, e.g. medical, health searches for medical OR health.

**Advanced Search**

**Additional limits:**
- All text
- Record title
- Author
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Title, abstract or keywords
- Tables
- Publication type
- Source
- DOI
- Cochrane product
- Record status
- Date

**Retrieved too much**, narrow your search by:
- AND in another concept
- Limit to publication type (RCT, Review etc)
- Use MeSH terms (diagnosis, therapy)
- Use a more specific term (femur neck fracture instead of hip fracture)

**Retrieved too little**, broaden your search by:
- Use OR with synonymous concepts
- Remove all limits
- Use a broader term (eye disease instead of retinal disease)
- Truncate text words
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of question</th>
<th>Best type of study</th>
<th>Useful search terms</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Therapy          | 1. RCT  
2. Cohort  
3. Case control  
4. Case series | • Randomised controlled trial  
• Controlled clinical trial  
• Therapy [sh]  
• Double blind method [MeSH]  
• Placebo*  
• Treatment Outcome [MeSH] | MeSH |
|                  |                   | • Multicenter Study  
• Clinical Trial  
• Random*  
• Management | MeSH |
|                  |                   | *The best single-term strategy is Randomised Controlled Trial| |
| Diagnosis        | Prospective, blind to a gold standard | • Sensitivity and specificity [MeSH]  
• Diagnosis  
• False Negative Reactions [MeSH]  
• Predictive Value of Tests [MeSH]  
• Comparative study [MeSH] | MeSH |
|                  |                   | • False Positive Reactions [MeSH]  
• Differential Diagnosis [MeSH]  
• Clinical trial | MeSH |
|                  |                   | *The best single-term search is Sensitivity and Specificity [MeSh]| |
| Prognosis        | 1. Cohort Study  
2. Case control  
3. Case series | • Prognosis [MeSH]  
• Cohort Studies [MeSH]  
• Survival Analysis [MeSH]  
• Morbidity [MeSH] | MeSH |
|                  |                   | • Outcome Assessment [MeSH]  
• Mortality [MeSH]  
• Disease progression [MeSH]  
• Course | MeSH |
| Aetiology        | 1. RCT  
2. Cohort study  
3. Case control  
4. Case series | • Randomised Controlled Trial  
• EXP Risk [MeSH]  
• Causality [MeSH]  
• Etiology [sh]  
• Longitudinal Studies [MeSH]  
• Odds AND Ratio* | MeSH |
|                  |                   | • Comparative Study [MeSH]  
• Cohort Studies [MeSH]  
• Case Control Studies [MeSH]  
• Follow up Studies [MeSH]  
• Risk | MeSH |
| Questions of harm| 1. RCT  
2. Cohort study  
3. Case control  
4. Case series | • EXP Risk [MeSH]  
• Toxicity [sh]  
• Consensus Development Conference  
• Consensus Development Conference, NIH | MeSH |
|                  |                   | • Guideline  
• Adverse Effects [sh]  
• Risk  
• Practice Guideline | MeSH |

**Abbreviation**  
- **MeSH**: MeSH subject heading  
- **sh**: MeSH sub-heading  
- *****: Denotes truncation