

Quick Reference Guide

What is the Cochrane Library?

It is a collection of databases covering evidence-based healthcare, containing information such as systematic reviews, clinical trials and economic evaluations.

It is updated quarterly.

How can I access it?

Access the Cochrane Library at
www.thecochranelibrary.com

You can register to save searches and access other features, but it is not necessary.

Are there other alternatives?

Cochrane has excellent coverage of high-level evidence, particularly systematic reviews, and is a good place to start a search.

Other databases you could use are NHS Evidence (www.evidence.nhs.uk) or the TRIP Database (www.tripdatabase.com).


If you wish to carry out a search for journal articles, you can also access Medline and EMBASE, along with other databases via the NHS Health Information Resources site (<http://library.sath.nhs.uk/databases>) using your NHS Athens account.

How do I search?

You can use the main search box on the home page to carry out a simple search.

For best results, use a few keywords from your search question.

For example, if your question is 'Is physiotherapy effective in lower back pain?' your search query could be:



SEARCH THE COCHRANE LIBRARY

Title, Abstract or Keywords ▾

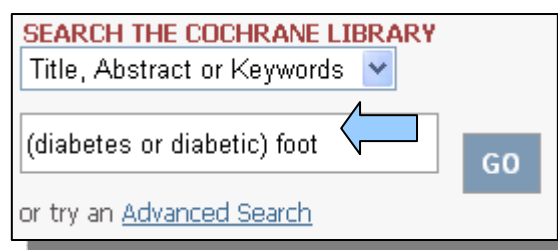
physiotherapy low back pain

GO

or try an [Advanced Search](#)

Enter your keywords and click on 'Go' or press 'enter' to begin.

Note that it searches for items that contain **all** the words you type (by treating searches as 'and' searches by default). If you want to search for synonyms, put brackets around and 'or' between each word for example:



SEARCH THE COCHRANE LIBRARY

Title, Abstract or Keywords ▾

(diabetes or diabetic) foot

GO

or try an [Advanced Search](#)

You can also browse by topic for Cochrane Reviews from the front page.

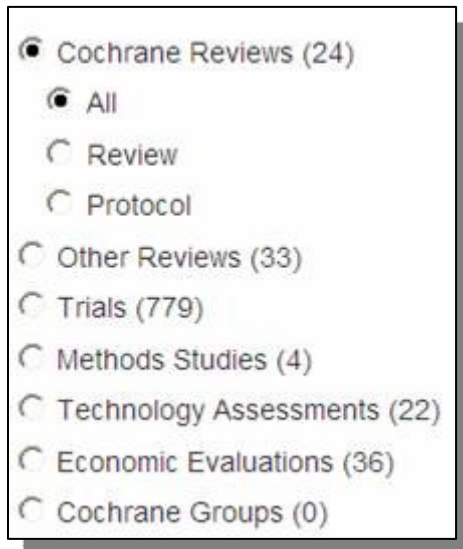


BROWSE BY TOPICS

- [Anaesthesia & pain control](#) (205)
- [Blood disorders](#) (120)
- [Cancer](#) (402)
- [Child health](#) (1467)

How are the results displayed?

Results are shown grouped by database.



Click on the name of a database section to see the results for that section.

Cochrane Reviews contains full-text systematic reviews by the Cochrane Collaboration (these may sometimes be protocols of reviews in progress).

Other Reviews contains details, and often abstracts, of quality assessed systematic reviews published in healthcare journals.

Trials provides references, and often abstracts, of clinical trials published in healthcare journals and some unpublished trials. Many of the trials indexed here are also indexed in Medline or EMBASE.

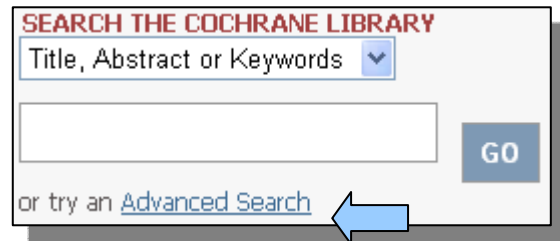
Methods Studies presents a bibliography of articles, books and conference proceedings that report on methods used when conducting controlled trials.

Technology Assessments provides details of ongoing and completed assessments of the medical, social, ethical, and economic implications of healthcare interventions.

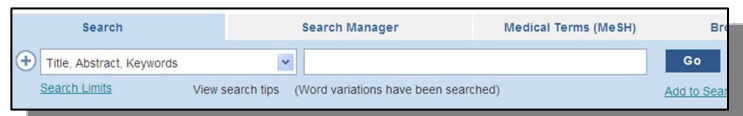
Economic Evaluations provides abstracts and an appraisal of the quality of articles comparing the costs and outcomes of healthcare interventions.

How can I do advanced searching?

Click on the link to 'Advanced search' below the search box.



The advanced search option allows you to build complex searches using Boolean (And, Or, Not), to use MeSH thesaurus terms, to specify the field(s) you wish to search, to view your search history, and more.



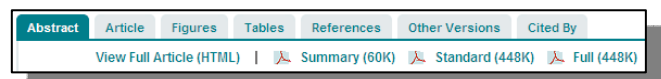
We recommend using MeSH Searches for the most accurate search results.

How can I view the full text of an item?

Cochrane Reviews are available in full by clicking on the title link (protocols will not be in full).



You'll be able to view the different sections of the review using the tabs, or download PDF versions to save or print.



Within the other sections of the Library (for example, 'Other Reviews'), you won't be able to access the full-text directly, but you may still be able to view the item online if the NHS subscribes to the journal.

Visit <http://library.sath.nhs.uk/journals> to check whether the journal title you want is available online, or held in your local health library.