

The Cochrane Library is a unique collection of databases providing reliable information to guide effective healthcare decisions. Unlike MEDLINE or CINAHL, the *Cochrane Library* includes the full-text, including graphs, of the original systematic reviews produced by the Cochrane Collaboration. The reviews, which are updated regularly, provide quality, assessed information. Also included are critical appraisals of high-quality reviews published elsewhere.

Creating a Search:

Search example: Are zinc, Echinacea, or vitamin c effective for treating or preventing the common cold?

1. Enter the first search term in the search box and click Continue.

Search Search manager Medical terms (MeSH) PICO search

Save this search View/Share saved searches Search help

Print search history

#1 "common cold" Limits 1755

#2 Type a search term or use the S or MeSH buttons to compose S MeSH Limits N/A

Clear all Highlight orphan lines



Note: The default search is a “keyword” search which looks for the string of characters, exactly as entered. Synonyms or alternate phrasings should also be considered in order to be complete (e.g. common cold or rhinovirus).



Tip: Use the * to search alternate word endings (e.g. transplant* will retrieve transplant, transplants, transplantation, transplanted, transplanting, etc.)



Tip: Enclose exact phrases in quotations (e.g. “common cold”; “vitamin c”)

2. Enter the next search term on the next line. Continue entering terms until all concepts are present.

Note: You must hit Continue after each term is entered.

Search Search manager Medical terms (MeSH) PICO search

Save this search View/Share saved searches Search help

Print search history

#1 "common cold" Limits 1755

#2 rhinovirus Limits 535

#3 zinc or echinacea or "vitamin c" or "ascorbic acid" Cancel Continue

- Combine search terms with AND/OR, as appropriate.

Search	Search manager	Medical terms (MeSH)	PICO search
Save this search View/Share saved searches ? Search help			
Print search history			
+			
-	+	#1	"common cold" Limits 1755
-	+	#2	rhinovirus Limits 535
-	+	#3	zinc or echinacea or "vitamin c" or "ascorbic acid" Limits 15560
-	+	#4	#1 OR #2 Limits 2075
-	+	#5	#3 and #4 Limits 239



Note: You must use the # in front of your search numbers (e.g. #1 and #2)



Tip: Synonyms or words to be combined with OR can be entered in one search box (see #3)



Tip: **AND** retrieves references in which **both** search terms **must** be present; **restrictive** way of combining (Ex. arthritis **and** aspirin)

OR retrieves references in which **either** term **may** be present; **expansive** way of combining and good for synonym building (Ex. aspirin **or** ibuprofen **or** acetaminophen)

- Click on the result number at the end of the row to review available results.

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Note: **The number is the total of hits across all sections of Cochrane Library, not the number of systematic reviews available.**

- The Search Results page defaults to showing results from the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, if any are available. Click the tabs to see the other sections (protocols, trials, etc.).

Cochrane Reviews 29	Cochrane Protocols 5	Trials 202	Editorials 1	Special Collections 0	Clinical Answers 2	More ▼
29 Cochrane Reviews matching "#5 - #3 and #4"						
Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews Issue 7 of 12, July 2023						
<input type="checkbox"/> Select all (29) Export selected citation(s) Show all previews						
Order by Relevancy ▼						Results per page 25 ▼
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Neuraminidase inhibitors for preventing and treating influenza in adults and children Tom Jefferson, Mark A Jones, Peter Doshi, Chris B Del Mar, Rokuro Hama, Matthew J Thompson, Elizabeth A Spencer, Igbo J Onakpoya, Kamal R Mahtani, David Nunan, Jeremy Howick, Carl J Heneghan Intervention Review 10 April 2014 Free access Show preview ▼					

6. When you click on a title, a new window will open with the review. Sections on the right allow you to navigate to portions of the review (Results, Discussion, Figures, Tables, etc.). The review may be opened as a PDF file either as the Summary, Standard, or Full View.

The screenshot shows the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews interface for the review 'Vitamin C for preventing and treating the common cold'. The header includes the Cochrane logo and the review title. Below the title, it lists the authors 'Harri Hemilä, Elizabeth Chalker' and their declarations of interest. The version published is '31 January 2013' and the version history is available. The DOI link is 'https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD000980.pub4'. On the right side, there are buttons for 'Download PDF', 'Cite this Review', 'Print', 'Comment', 'Share', and 'Follow'. Below these buttons, there is an 'Am score' of 3.666 and a note 'Cited in 11 guidelines'. The main content area is divided into sections: 'Abstract', 'Background', 'Objectives', and 'Search methods'. The 'Abstract' section is currently selected and shows the text: 'Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) for preventing and treating the common cold has been a subject of controversy for 70 years.' The 'Background' section shows the text: 'To find out whether vitamin C reduces the incidence, the duration or severity of the common cold when used either as a continuous regular supplementation every day or as a therapy at the onset of cold symptoms.' The 'Search methods' section shows the text: 'We searched CENTRAL 2012, Issue 11, MEDLINE (1966 to November week 3, 2012), EMBASE (1990 to November 2012), CINAHL (January 2010 to November 2012), LILACS (January 2010 to November 2012) and Web of Science (January 2010 to November 2012). We also searched the U.S. National Institutes of Health trials register and WHO ICTRP on 29 November 2012.' On the right side, there is a 'Contents' menu with links to 'Abstract', 'PICOs', 'Plain language summary', 'Authors' conclusions', 'Background', 'Objectives', 'Methods', 'Results', 'Discussion', 'Appendices', 'Figures and tables', 'References', 'Characteristics of studies', 'Data and analyses', and 'Download statistical data'.



Note: The full-text is frequently very long.

Printing/Exporting from Results:

- The full-text of the Cochrane Reviews/Protocols must be printed one at time. Open the PDF view for a printer-friendly layout.
- Bibliographic information from any tab/section of the Cochrane Library may be printed or exported.
 1. Click checkmarks next to desired records.
 2. Click the Export Selected Citations button.
 3. Choose the Export Format: Plan Text, RIS, BibteX, or CSV
 4. Click Download.
 5. Use the downloaded file to import the citations into the reference manager of your choice.

Printing the Search Strategy:

If a search is done via the Search Manager option, the search strategy can be printed/saved.

1. Click the Print Search History button at the bottom of the Search Strategy box.
2. Open the Notepad file that downloaded to your computer and print.

Saving the Search Strategy:

1. Click the Save this Search button.
2. Click Save As (click Save if you want to overwrite an existing saved search and ignore step 3).
3. Name the search and click Save As.



Note: To view a saved search, click the View/Share Saved Searches button.

Advanced Search Tips:

Type	Description	Example
Boolean operators	Use AND, OR to combine search terms. AND is restrictive and forces concepts to overlap (both/all). OR is expansive and is good for synonym building/putting like concepts together (either/any).	magnesium sulfate AND (eclampsia OR perinatal asphyxia)
Proximity search using NEAR	Use NEAR/ with a number to indicate proximity of terms either before or after each other. The default proximity value for the operator when no number is entered is 6.	antidepressant NEAR/10 narcolepsy
Proximity search using NEXT	Use NEXT with a number to match terms that appear next to each other. Note that the apostrophe within a term is treated as a space, thus to search for adjacent words in a term such as Down's Syndrome , the best search parameter to use is: down* NEAR/2 syndrome	cholera NEXT treat*
Wildcard truncation	Use an asterisk (*) to search for multiple characters before, within, or after a search string. A question mark can be used to search for a single character.	abdom* *eclampsia
Exact phrase search	Insert a term within quotation marks to create an exact match. Note that no search method is case sensitive, thus "PH" matches the same results as "pH", "Ph", or "ph".	"mental health treatment" matches the phrase in exactly that word sequence
Stemming	The stemming feature within the search allows words with small spelling variants to be matched. The term tumor will also match tumour .	tumor cell
Pluralization and singularization matches	Pluralized forms of words also match singular versions, and vice versa. The term drugs will find both drug and drugs . To match either just the singular or plural form of a terms, use an exact match search and include the word in quotation marks.	"vaccine"
Diphthong characters	Terms with spelling variations that include diphthongs should be searched with a wildcard character to ensure that all forms of a term are matched. Some more common terms with diphthongs such as "haemorrhage" are automatically matched to their variant spellings through stemming.	isch*mic stroke
Stop words	Words such as "in," "the" and "of" are matched in the search. The Boolean search operators AND, OR, NOT, NEAR, and NEXT are the only terms treated as stop words.	
Hyphenated terms	Hyphens are treated as a space with an associated NEXT operator. The term <i>heart-related</i> will match the same results as <i>heart</i> NEXT <i>related</i> .	evidence-based NEXT medicine