**Cochrane Library Databases** is a collection of medical information produced by Cochrane and other entities intended for practical use by healthcare personnel. Cochrane Review, the central focus of the database, provides systematic reviews and analyses, published on a monthly basis.

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**To Access Cochrane Library Database**

Go to the Libraries' homepage:
[www.tarleton.edu/library](http://www.tarleton.edu/library)

Click on Databases A-Z.

Then, click on the B-C tab.

Click on Cochrane Library from the list:

The Advanced Search screen of Cochrane Library will open.

**Advanced Search**

Please note that the Advanced Search is optimised for English search terms. Certain features, such as search operators and MeSH terms, are only available in English.

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*But first, a bit about the many things that you can find in Cochrane Library...*
A systematic review is the study of specialized empirical evidence gathered to discern and identify research that answers a unique research question. These systematic reviews, which are gathered, and published on a monthly basis by the Cochrane Group, are updated regularly through the review of new studies. The systematic reviews are a useful tool to medical personnel who would like to provide patient care with the most up-to-date information.

Another area of the database is Trials.
Trials is a source of controlled trial reports compiled from CINAHL, PubMed, Embase, Clinical Trials.gov, and WHO’s International Clinical Trials Register Platform. These reports are contained within Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL). Users will find bibliographic data and abstracts, but not full text articles.

Also available are Clinical Answers

Cochran Clinical Answers (CCA) provides usable, point-of-care information taken from a Cochrane review(s), based on a PICO (Population, Interventions(s), Comparisons(s), and Outcome(s)) framework, designed for healthcare professionals use. CCA are prioritized for inclusion based upon the relevance of the answer in response to the clinical need.

Scroll down the homepage to locate
Highlighted Reviews, Editorials, and Special Collections
Highlighted Reviews are systematic reviews selected from the monthly publication. To view all the reviews for the month, go to the complete issue.

**Highlighted Reviews**

Editorials focus on topics related to systematic reviews or other topics of interest and are designed to create discussion within the healthcare community. These stimulate good decision-making for clinical care and policy-making. Cochrane’s Editor-in-Chief commissions editorials.

**Editorials**

Special Collections are curated selections that focus on timely or popular topics and are the result of an accepted proposal to the Cochrane Editorial and Methods Department.

**Special Collections**

*Scroll to the bottom of the homepage to locate the **Browse by Topic** area:*

In the **Browse by Topic** tab, users may click on a desired topic to reveal all the Cochrane Reviews in that area. Users may also move to the **Browse by Cochrane Review Group** tab to view **Topics** in this area.

**Browse by Topic**

Let’s move on to **Searching**.
Searches may be performed from the Cochrane homepage by entering a search in the search box and selecting the type of search desired, then clicking the search icon.

Users may also perform advanced searches by clicking the Advanced Search button.

All searches will display results in a table format. Users should first filter results by making selections from the Filter your results column on the left-hand side of the page. Users may select the desired type of results from the tabs.
The Advanced Search page has three tabs: Search, Search manager, Medical terms (MeSH).

Under the **Search tab**, users may select the type of search by clicking on the drop-down arrow to reveal the choices.

A search term or phrase should be entered in the next box.

**Searches** performed in the **Search tab** may be refined by using the **Search limits** button.

Users may select their desired limitations and **Apply limits** to their search.

To execute the search, users will click **Run search**.
Searches are done by entering terms into the first box. Searches may be manipulated through various features shown below.

Lines may also be added or subtracted by clicking the plus or minus signs to the left of the numbered search rows.

Searches may be saved by clicking the **Save this search** button after logging into your institutional account.

Clicking the “S” button expands the search area to add or subtract search lines, which helps to define the search more.

Clicking on the **Limits** button allows the user to add limits, as previously shown, to the search.

Clicking on the **MeSH** button allows the user to limit using MeSH terms, or the user may select the third tab among the Advanced search tabs, the **Medical terms (MeSH)** tab, for more in-depth exploration of various medical terms.

*Let’s learn about MeSH terms and using the MeSH tab.*
The Medical terms (MeSH) tab may be used to search using the national Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) controlled vocabulary thesaurus. MeSH terms are used to help describe medical terms and categorize them in a database. Users may use this tab to look for additional words to use in further searches, as well as view results from the search.

Users may enter familiar words or phrases in the first search box even though it’s indicated that a MeSH term should be entered. Cochrane will predict the term to the closest MeSH term.

Ex.: Terms Entered: skin cancer  Changed Term: Skin Neoplasms

MeSH Term Searches give results in three ways: Thesaurus Matches, MeSH Trees, and Search Results. All three ways show numerous related terms useful for further searches as well as giving the table of results as shown in all searches.

**Definition**

Skin Neoplasms - Tumors or cancer of the SKIN.

**Thesaurus Matches** show three types of matches: Exact Word Matches, Phrases Matches, and Any Word Matches, all of which give various words similar to the search word.

**MeSH Trees** show MeSH hierarchies of related terms used within the MeSH thesaurus. Clicking the **Explode all trees** reveals the hierarchy of terms.

**Search Results** give options for viewing trials and Cochrane systematic reviews results by clicking the View results button.
Results from searches done from the homepage or from the various tabs of the Advance search page will all give results in the same table format. The table has six tabs: Cochrane Reviews, Cochrane Protocols, Trials, Editorials, Special collections, Clinical Answers, and Other Reviews.

Using the **Cochrane Reviews** tab, you will find systematic reviews. With the oversight of and collaboration with the Cochran Review Group, the authors design, research, and write a systematic review, which is then edited, and peer-reviewed by a Cochran Review Group.

Using the **Cochrane Protocols** tab, you will find information about the formation of research questions, criteria for article inclusion, designs of the studies, and benefits and harms associated with the studies. Authors are required to update their reviews and to respond to comments or otherwise their review will be withdrawn.

Using the **Trials** tab, you will find bibliographic information about clinical trial reports found within **Cochran Controlled Register of Trials (CENTRAL)**. Full trials are published in the databases, PubMed (found in Tarleton’s Databases A-Z) and Embase as well as Clinical Trials.gov.

Using the **Editorials** tab, you will find expanded research commissioned by the Cochrane Editor-in-Chief, intended to generate dialogue and engender thoughtful decision-making by healthcare professionals for patient care and policy-making.

Using the **Special Collections** tab, you will find topical overview articles focused on selected medical conditions or public health issues, commissioned by the Cochrane Editorial and Methods Department, for targeted healthcare audience, applicable for patient care.

Using the **Clinical Answers** tab, you will find usable, point-of-care information taken from Cochrane review(s), based on a PICO -- Population, Interventions(s), Comparisons(s), and Outcome(s) -- framework, designed for healthcare professionals use for patient care.

Using the **Other Reviews** tab, you will find informative articles created outside of Cochrane, specifically from the Epistemonikos health evidence database.
Systematic Reviews contain a plethora of information. Users may scroll down to read through all the information that begins with the systematic review, as shown below:

To the right of the systematic review is a column from which the user may select specific items to reveal those specific aspects of the article.

- **Cite this Review** is very helpful since Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews is cited as a journal itself. The APA Style Blog article, Clinical Practice References, gives a good explanation and a sample reference.

- Readers may make comments under **Comment on Review**. Authors are required to reply.

- To read the full systematic review begin at **Abstract** and read through **Discussion**.

- Under **Information** users will find the DOI and Altmetrics.

- Under **Authors** is found all the authors' credentials, contact information, and references to other articles by these authors.

- Under **History** is found the Cochrane history as this review has changed and been updated over time.

- Under **References** are all the references for the review with clickable access to those resources.

- Clicking on **Related content** will result in a page showing other related reviews and content, related MeSH headings, and, if available, related podcasts.

Systematic reviews are available in abridged format from the Cochrane Library App which may be downloaded from Apple App Store or GooglePlay.