Cochrane MDSG Group checklist

Please complete this checklist and email it to: Helen Nagels, Managing Editor, [Cochrane.MDSG@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:Cochrane.MDSG@auckland.ac.nz) when you submit your review for publication. The checklist is not comprehensive, but includes areas where corrections are commonly required.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cochrane Review title:** |  |
| **Contact person:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |

# General

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 |  | All authors have seen and approved this version of the review and take full responsibility for the accuracy of its contents and order of authors |
| 1.2 |  | All relevant headings in RevMan have been activated and all sections completed |
| 1.3 |  | RevMan validation check has been completed (File menu > Reports > Validation report) |
| 1.4 |  | Spell checked in RevMan (Tools menu > Check spelling). |

# Title and review information

(see Cochrane 2011 Handbook [Section 4.2](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_2_title_and_review_information_or_protocol_information.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2.1 |  | Date entered on which the draft completed (usually the date of submission to MDSG, and within six months of your literature search) in the ‘Assessed as Up-to-date’ field. |
| 2.2 |  | Last date of search entered in the ‘Date of search’ field. |
| 2.3 |  | ‘Next stage expected’ field has been completed (usually update due after two years). |

# Abstract

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 11.8](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_11/11_8_writing_an_abstract.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 |  | 700 words or fewer. |
| **Objectives** | | |
| 3.2 |  | Same as the objective in the main body of the text. |
| **Selection criteria** | | |
| 3.3 |  | Expressed in the form ‘[Type of study] of [type of intervention or comparison] in [disease, problem or type of people]'. E.g. RCTs of surgery for endometriosis in premenopausal women |
| **Data collection and analysis** | | |
| 3.4 |  | States whether study selection, data extraction and risk of bias assessment were done independently by more than one person. |

# Plain Language Summary

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 11.9](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_11/11_9_writing_a_plain_language_summary.htm)**)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 4.1 |  | 400 words or fewer, using section headers to aid readability |
| 4.2 |  | Explains why the review is important |
| 4.3 |  | Includes the main findings of the review. States magnitude of any benefit. Avoids the word ‘risk’ |
| 4.4 |  | Includes total number of studies and participants |
| 4.5 |  | Includes a brief comment on any limitations of the review (e.g. high risk of bias, any concerns about commercial funding sources, selective outcomes reporting). |

# [Background](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_ii_background.htm), [Objectives](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_iii_objectives.htm) and [Methods](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_iv_methods.htm)

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.5](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_main_text.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.1 |  | Any changes from published protocol noted in the ‘Differences between protocol and review’ section |
| 5.2 |  | Have consulted the CRG Trials Search Co-ordinator about the search strategy. |
| 5.3 |  | Includes a link to the Appendix containing the complete set of search terms for each electronic database. |

# Results

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.5](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_v_results.htm))

### 6.1 Description of studies

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 6.1.1 |  | Reports the outcomes of the search, including how many potentially relevant studies found, how many excluded (briefly summarising why), and how many included. (Figures are possible). |
| 6.1.2 |  | Includes co-publications of the same study under a single study ID |
| 6.1.3 |  | Includes links to all relevant tables, figures, analyses and appendices |
| 6.1.4 |  | Gives a **brief** overview of the included studies. Use Revman subheadings: Participants (including sample numbers), Interventions and Outcomes. |
| 6.1.5 |  | Includes no study results in this section. |

### 6.2 Risk of bias of included studies

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 6.2.1 |  | Gives a concise summary of general risk of bias in the included studies, including variability across studies and any important flaws in individual studies. |
| 6.2.2 |  | The summary of the risk of bias is consistent with the information presented in the ‘Risk of bias’ tables – i.e. uses the same headings and subheadings (NB report both sequence generation and allocation concealment under the RevMan 5 heading “Allocation (selection bias)”. |

### 6.3 Effects of interventions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 6.3.1 |  | Summarises the results in a structured way (e.g. organised by comparison and then outcome 1.1.1, 1.1.2) |
| 6.3.2 |  | Uses the same order (preferably numbered) and the same names for comparisons and outcomes as those in the Methods section. Reports primary then secondary outcomes. |
| 6.3.3 |  | Reports results for each comparison, outcome and subgroup described in the Methods section, including those for which no results were found or which were not statistically significant. |
| 6.3.4 |  | Uses the statistics and methods described in the Methods section. |
| 6.3.5 |  | Numerical results reported in the text are the same as those displayed in ‘Data and analyses’ |
| 6.3.6 |  | Does not report results of individual studies unless there was only one study for that comparison. |
| 6.3.7 |  | Reports the number of studies and participants included, as well as a measure of uncertainty (e.g. OR 0.61, 95% CI 0.25 to 1.47, 3 RCTs, 120 participants) for each outcome |
| 6.3.8 |  | Reports results of any sensitivity analyses described in the Methods section (or else reports that sensitivity analyses not feasible) |
| 6.3.9 |  | Investigates heterogeneity as described in the Methods section and reports findings. |
| 6.3.10 |  | Clearly identifies any post-hoc analyses not pre-specified in the Methods section. |
| 6.3.11 |  | Does not include any interpretation of results. |
| 6.3.12 |  | Uses all RevMan 5 sub-headings. |

# Discussion

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.5](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_vi_discussion.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 7.1 |  | Briefly summarises the included studies and their results in plain language, including risk of bias, areas of uncertainty, and completeness of the available evidence. |
| 7.2 |  | Includes no results not reported in the Results section. |

# Authors’ conclusions

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.5](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_vii_authors_conclusions.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8.1 |  | Implications for practice: conclusions limited to those that can be supported by the Review findings |
| 8.2 |  | Implications for research: has specific suggestions about how any further research should be conducted |

# Differences between protocol and review

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.5](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_5_xi_differences_between_protocol_and_review.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 9.1 |  | Reports any differences in the methods used between the Cochrane Protocol and the Cochrane Review, giving reasons |

# 10. Tables

**10.1 Characteristics of included studies**

(see Cochrane Handbook Appendix A [Section 6.1](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/appendix_a/a_6_1_characteristics_of_included_studies.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 10.1.1 |  | Includes enough information on the study so that the reader doesn’t need to go and read it |
| **Methods** | | |
| 10.1.2 |  | Reports the study design (e.g. RCT; parallel, cross-over or cluster-randomised) and duration/dates |
| **Participants** | | |
| 10.1.3 |  | States the number of participants and describes their location, context, health status, age, and sex. |
| **Intervention** | | |
| 10.1.4 |  | Describes each intervention in detail |
| **Outcomes** | | |
| 10.1.5 |  | Gives details of either the outcomes from the study that are considered in the Cochrane Review, or else all outcomes measured or reported in the study. |
| 10.1.6 |  | Does not duplicate information that should be in the ‘Risk of bias’ assessment. |

### 10.2 Risk of bias (see Cochrane Handbook Part 2 [Chapter 8](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_8/8_assessing_risk_of_bias_in_included_studies.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 10.2.1 |  | Includes activated rows in the table to assess sequence generation, allocation concealment, blinding of participants, blinding of outcomes assessors, incomplete outcome data, selective outcome reporting, and other issues. |
| 10.2.2 |  | Provides detailed, clearly identified quotes from the study text, plus additional comments where necessary to support each judgement. |
| **Random sequence generation (selection bias)** | | |
| 10.2.3 |  | Describes the method for generating the random allocation of participants to the intervention groups |
| **Allocation concealment (selection bias)** | | |
| 10.2.4 |  | Describes how the assignment of participants to intervention groups was concealed throughout the recruitment and allocation process (before the interventions began). |
| **Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias)** | | |
| 10.2.5 |  | Describes who was blinded or masked during the conduct of the trial |
| **Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias)** | | | |
| 10.2.6 |  | Describes who was blinded or masked during the outcome assessment and analysis of the trial, including an assessment of the success of blinding. | |
| **Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias)** | | | |
| 10.2.7 |  | Describes the completeness of the available data, including information about withdrawals, exclusions, imputation of missing data and ‘as treated’ analysis. | |
| **Selective reporting (reporting bias)** | | | |
| 10.2.8 |  | Considers availability of the protocol of the primary studies and whether there is evidence of outcomes added, not reported, reported incompletely, or reported using methods that were not pre-specified. | |
| **Other bias** | | | |
| 10.2.9 |  | Describes any other concerns about the study (e.g. baseline imbalance, early stopping) | |
| 10.2.1 |  | Does not include issues that do not have direct implications for internal validity: e.g. sample size, ethical approval, funding. (These issues belong in Table of included studies) | |

### 10.3 Characteristics of excluded studies

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.6.3](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_6_3_characteristics_of_excluded_studies.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 10.3.1 |  | Lists studies that may appear to meet the eligibility criteria, but which were excluded. |
| 10.3.2 |  | Gives a **brief** reason why each study was excluded from the review (e.g. inappropriate comparator intervention). If a reason applies to more than one study, it is expressed in the same way each time. |

# Data and analyses

(see Cochrane Handbook [Section 4.8](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_4/4_8_data_and_analyses.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 11.1 |  | Uses names for comparisons, outcomes and subgroups consistent with rest of review and presented in the same order |
| 11.2 |  | The direction of effect and labels on the graphs are correct |

# 12. Style

(see Cochrane Style Guide at [www.cochrane.org/style/home.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/style/home.htm))

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 12.1 |  | Uses past tense throughout |
| 12.2 |  | Uses “no evidence of effect” rather than “evidence of no effect” (e.g. there was no evidence of benefit associated with XX compared to YY) |
| 12.3 |  | Uses ‘woman’ or ‘participant’ rather than ’patient’ where appropriate |
| 12.4 |  | All text uses the active voice |
| 12.5 |  | Explains all acronyms and abbreviations (e.g. World Health Organization (WHO)). |

# Updated Cochrane Reviews

(see Cochrane Handbook [Chapter 3](http://www.mrc-bsu.cam.ac.uk/cochrane/handbook/index.htm#chapter_3/3_maintaining_reviews_updates_amendments_and_feedback.htm))

If you are submitting an update to an already published Cochrane Review, please address these additional checks:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 13.1 |  | Includes an event in the ‘What’s New’ section to describe all relevant changes since the last published version of the Cochrane Review, including names and dates of new RCTS |
| 13.2 |  | Title is identical to published review unless any changes previously agreed with editorial staff |
| 13.3 |  | All relevant RevMan headings have been activated including Background and Methods section |

**Pet hates of the Co-ordinating Editor**

* 1. “Prospective RCTs”. Only use the phrase RCT as all RCTs are prospective by design and the word prospective is therefore redundant.
  2. Not completing the ‘What’s New Section”