

What's new from the Cochrane Back Review Group, September 2012

The Back Group has had a productive summer. Congratulations to our authors of new and updated reviews and protocols!

New Protocols

Effectiveness of posterior decompression techniques compared to conventional laminectomy for lumbar stenosis, Overdevest, G., et al. <http://bit.ly/PjEizy>

Fusion versus conservative management for low-grade isthmic spondylolisthesis, Sumant, S., et al. (to be published in *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 10)

New Reviews

Total disc replacement for chronic back pain in the presence of disc degeneration, Jacobs, W., et al. <http://bit.ly/OHu1hd>

Arthroplasty versus fusion in single-level cervical degenerative disc disease, Boselie, T., et al. <http://bit.ly/OJTsyx>

Spinal manipulative therapy for acute low-back pain, Rubinstein, S. et al., (<http://bit.ly/RSya5j>) or listen to the [podcast](#).

Exercises for adolescent idiopathic scoliosis, Romano, M., et al. <http://bit.ly/MyTpbk>

New Updates

Exercises for mechanical neck disorders, Kay, T., et al. <http://bit.ly/NFkTbx>

Massage for mechanical neck disorders, Patel, K., et al. <http://bit.ly/QdvrmB>

Other CBRG news

Upcoming editorial meetings at Low Back Forum

We have scheduled our editorial meetings for the day immediately before the [12th International Forum on Low Back Pain Research in Primary Care in Odense, Denmark](#).

The exact location is yet to be determined. Final details will be available closer to the event -- please check our website for up-to-date information.

All CBRG members are welcome to attend the Open Meeting. For planning purposes, please RSVP to [Allison](#) if you haven't already done so.

Summary of Findings (SoF) Tables

We are now requiring CBRG authors to include SoF tables in their reviews. Here are some helpful tips to get you started.

- Include all important/critical outcomes (primary outcomes and adverse events should be included, regardless of whether there was data or whether that data was pooled).
- Be sure to explain the outcomes (what is a good or better score and what is a bad or worse score?).
- Remember to note the duration of follow-up. Was the outcome measured six weeks or three months after the intervention?
- Avoid duplicate outcomes. If you include more than one follow-up point, choose the time most important to patients and decision makers.
- Even if you did not use meta-analysis, you can still “pool” your results narratively. You can find examples of this in two of our recently updated reviews:
[Exercises for mechanical neck disorders](#), Kay, T., et al.
[Massage for mechanical neck disorders](#), Patel, K., et al.

You can find more information about SoF tables and GRADEpro on the GRADE Work Group [website](#).

Archie Username and Password

If your contact information changes, please remember to update your Archie user profile by logging in and clicking on your name in the top right corner of the screen, under the Quick Search bar. This is particularly important for CBRG authors because we send out important notifications via Archie prior to publication.

Your Archie username is your email address. Please contact us if you can't remember which address you used. If you lose track of your password, simply click on the *Forgot Your Password?* link on the [Archie login page](#).

For more helpful tips, please visit our updated [FAQ](#) page on the CBRG website.

Training

10 - 11 December, 2012, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The Cochrane Diagnostic Test Accuracy Working Group will run its popular two-day workshop “Cochrane Systematic Reviews of Diagnostic Test Accuracy” for Cochrane review authors.

For more information and a registration form, please visit <http://srdta.cochrane.org/workshops-and-events>



CBRG Feature Author

Toon Boselie, MD

Toon is a neurosurgery resident at Maastricht University Medical Center in Maastricht, the Netherlands, and a PhD-candidate in the department of Epidemiology at Maastricht University. To date, he is an author on one published protocol and review within the Cochrane Collaboration. He is currently coordinating a randomized controlled trial investigating motion characteristics of a mobile cervical disc prosthesis.

What are your primary research interests?

My primary research interest is investigating cervical spine motion. As the main topic of my thesis I have a special interest in investigating quality of cervical spine motion in healthy subjects, with the goal of comparing this to patients randomized to anterior cervical discectomy either with, or without, placement of a mobile cervical disc prosthesis. This is the subject of an RCT that we are currently conducting at our center. The goal of this study is to find out if this prosthesis not only allows for a certain amount of segmental rotation, but more importantly, if the cervical spine as a whole displays a physiological motion pattern.

How did you first get involved in Cochrane?

I was planning to write a review about the current level of evidence on cervical disc prostheses as a part of my PhD-thesis. Ever since medical school I liked the ideology behind Cochrane reviews, which is why I discussed applying for a title on this subject with my thesis advisor, who has been involved in several reviews within the Cochrane Back Review Group and Musculoskeletal group. He thought this was a good idea. We then searched for suitable people for the team to form a multidisciplinary and international team and applied for the title. This was granted about three years ago.

What is the best part of your job?

Still being a junior resident at this time, I don't perform a lot of surgeries yet, but it definitely is the best part of the job if you are able to help a patient doing something you really like.

Any hobbies/interests?

I like to be active and do some sports a couple of times a week. Mostly running, which really helps me to get my mind off things and relax a bit, running any distance up to a marathon. Two years ago I have taken up triathlons, which I enjoy as well. Although ever since my residency started I have to admit I find it almost impossible to find the time to go running, swimming and biking each week, between my clinical duties and work on my thesis research.

Building computer systems is a second hobby of mine. Although I don't need a new pc often, I have quite a lot of family and friends that I can build systems for.

What was the most challenging part of writing a Cochrane review?

As a clinician, my background knowledge of the various statistical analyses and the methodology of writing a systematic review was fairly limited. In the process of writing the protocol, and later writing the review itself, I have been reading up a lot. If I was unable to find an answer to my question I could always fall back on the epidemiologist in my team. This has definitely been a good opportunity to learn a lot about study methodology and the statistics involved. It has changed the way I read an article, which primarily translates into a much more critical point of view.

Other Cochrane News

Mark Wilson appointed new CEO of The Cochrane Collaboration

<http://www.cochrane.org/news/news-events/current-news/mark-wilson-appointed-new-ceo-cochrane-collaboration>

Announcing launch of new and improved search functionality for *The Cochrane Library*

Users will see major changes to the layout of search pages and will soon be able to use new search features including:

- Auto-suggest features within both basic and MeSH search functions
- Updated display of search results and filtering options
- Ability to view search terms and results on the same page
- Ability to insert lines and add one search to one another
- Improved MeSH look-up feature
- Hover-over Tool Tips giving a brief explanation of the functions

<http://www.cochrane.org/news/tags/authors/announcing-launch-new-and-improved-search-functionality-cochrane-library>

Call for applications: Aubrey Sheiham Public Health and Primary Care Scholarship 2012

<http://www.cochrane.org/news/tags/authors/call-applications-aubrey-sheiham-public-health-and-primary-care-scholarship-2012>

CBRG Chatroom

We want to get to know our members! What sparked your interest in the field of back pain research? Was it a personal experience? Share your story with us at

<https://www.facebook.com/CochraneBackReviewGroup>

Teresa, Allison and Rachel