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Introduction

The Cochrane Library is a suite of databases which will help you find reliable evidence about the effects of health care interventions. The database is freely available on the internet. It contains these databases:

- Cochrane Reviews
- Other Reviews
- Clinical Trials
- Methods Studies
- Technology Assessments
- Economic Evaluations
- Cochrane Groups

You will find out more about these individual databases later.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this workbook you should be able to:

- Access the Cochrane Library
- Know the difference between the databases in the Cochrane Library
- Perform a variety of searches within the Cochrane Library
- Combine search results
- Display the results of your searches
- Save, print or export your search results

About this workbook

Internet Explorer is the supported browser so this workbook assumes that you are using it.

1. Getting Started

Throughout this workbook, you will learn how to use subject headings and keywords to find results to answer a particular question:

"Can cognitive behavioural therapy help to improve self esteem in people with eating disorders?"

While this might be outside of your subject field, the guided example will teach you the principles behind the literature searching process. You can then apply the same skills to search for articles on your own topics.

a. Finding the Cochrane Library

Exercise 1

The Cochrane Library is freely available, so you can go there direct: http://www.thecochranelibrary.com

You should now see the following screen:

You do not have to log in to search the database, but if you log in you can use a **personal account** to save your search strategies. This means that you can return at a later date and re-run saved searches instead of typing in your search terms all over again. Another of the benefits of saving your search strategy is that any matching records that have been added to the database since the last time you ran your search will automatically be included with your latest results.

If you would like to set up a personal account, click on **Advanced Search** from the homepage, which is located under the search box on the top right hand side. From the Advanced Search screen, click on **Log in/Register** on the top right and follow the prompts.

b. Understanding the databases in the Cochrane Library

The Cochrane Library is made up of 7 databases:

- Cochrane Reviews - Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- Other Reviews - Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effect
- Clinical Trials - Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials
- Methods Studies - Cochrane Methodology Register
- Technology Assessments - Health Technology Assessment Database
- Economic Evaluations - NHS Economic Evaluation Database
- Cochrane Groups - About The Cochrane Collaboration

To find out about the different types of information each database provides and which ones are most relevant to you for a particular search, you can read their descriptions to find out the type of results (systematic reviews, clinical trials etc) each database offers.

Exercise 2

From the homepage, select the **About** drop down menu and click on 'About the Cochrane Library'.

Make a note of the databases you might find useful during your research.

2. Breaking down your question

To perform an effective search, you need to start by breaking down your research question into its main topics.

In this workbook we are looking for evidence to find out:

"Can cognitive behavioural therapy help to improve self esteem in people with eating disorders?"

In this case our main topics are:

1. **cognitive behavioural therapy**
2. **self esteem**
3. **eating disorders**

The other words in the research question do not need to be searched for.

Here's the process:

1. First we will search for results about **cognitive behavioural therapy**
2. Then we will search for results about **self esteem**
3. Then we will search for results about **eating disorders**
4. Finally, we will combine these 3 sets of results using **AND**. This will leave us with one set of results that contain **all** your topics together

It is possible to just type the following into the database to find some simple results, but it won't be a comprehensive search:

cognitive behavioural therapy AND self esteem AND eating disorders

In order to search comprehensively we will make use of both subject heading (MeSH) and keyword searches.

3. Searching using subject headings

Medical Subject Headings are items from the MeSH thesaurus published by the US National Library of Medicine. Headings are organised hierarchically and records found using subject headings will be *about* the chosen term (as opposed to material searched using keyword searching only, which may simply contain that word in the text).

For example, if you search using the MeSH term **Kidney Failure, Acute** you can be assured that all of your results will be significantly about that topic regardless of the exact terminology used by the author in the document itself.

Note - Not all databases in the Cochrane Library assign MeSH headings to their records so you cannot rely on searching by this method alone (you should also use keyword searching alongside it).

For those of you who are familiar with using subject headings to search Medline, the Cochrane Library uses the same set of subject headings. This means your Medline search strategy can be easily replicated in the Cochrane Library.
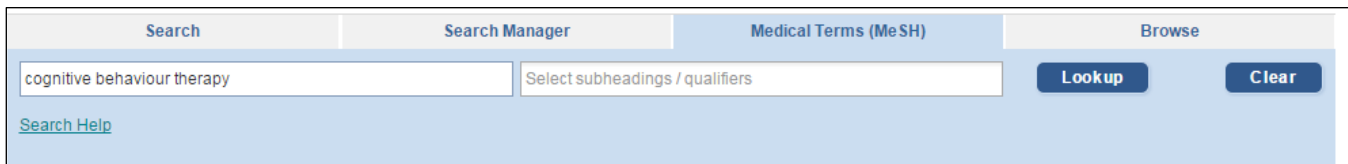
Exercise 3

First, click on Advanced search
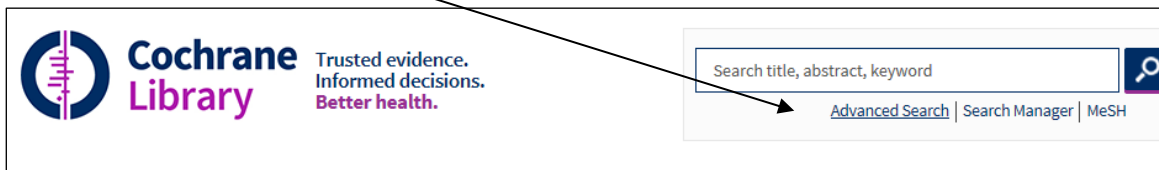
Now click on the Medical Terms (MeSH) tab:

Let's search for some records about our first concept, **cognitive behavioural therapy.** Type this into the search box and click **Lookup** to search. The database will now try to map that topic to the closest subject heading it has available.

[As you start typing in your topic, the database may make some suggestions as you type, if a suggestion matches your search, click on it to select it]

In this case it maps to the recognised subject heading **Cognitive Therapy**

The layout of the MeSH terms in a tree shows how different terms are related to each other, for example **Cognitive Therapy** is a **narrower** term within the **broader** topic of **Behavior Therapy.**

Sometimes the heading will have narrower topics, indicated by a number in square brackets such as [+2], each with extra results that you may want to include. In this case our topic **Cognitive Therapy** has 2 narrower topics within it: **Mindfulness** and **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy**. To include these topics you need to choose to **explode** your subject heading, which will retrieve all the records on that topic, and retrieve all the extra articles about the narrower topics as well.

Note: The database will automatically explode your term for you unless you deselect and click **Single MeSH term (unexploded)** instead. Sometimes your term may appear in more than one tree, hence the options to **Explode all**/**selected trees**.

Click on **View results**. Then scroll down to view the results found in each database (note the results are separated into the seven databases which make up Cochrane)

IMPORTANT: now scroll back up and click on **Add to Search Manager** as shown circled in the image above. This will allow us to use this search later when we come to combine it with our other searches.

Now follow exactly the same process for the other two concepts in our example research question:

Self esteem (this will find the subject heading **self concept**)

Eating disorders (this will find the subject heading **feeding and eating disorders**)

Remember to also add these searches to the Search Manager so we can use them again later.

4. Searching with keywords

Subject heading searches will probably find you many of the relevant papers, but for a comprehensive search you need to supplement your subject heading searches with some **keyword searches**.

Searching by keyword enables you to type in a word or phrase and the database will bring back any references where there is a match (or very similar word/meaning) in the article's record.

Note: The Cochrane Library search has an Auto-suggest feature. This will automatically look for some obvious variants of your search term e.g. searching for the word **clear** will find **clear** but also **clears**, **cleared**, **clearing** etc. Some spelling variations will also be detected e.g. **tumour** will also retrieve **tumor**. In this workbook however, we're going to override this feature by using the truncation method when we search, which allows us to control which variations will be searched for.

You will need to make a judgement about how far you try to define the concepts you are interested in – this often depends on why you are carrying out the search. Under some circumstances it may be appropriate to stick to one major way of defining a concept, but if you're trying to be more comprehensive you should aim to think of and include as many synonyms as possible.

Spend a few moments thinking about the different ways our concepts could be referred to in the literature and list them below. Consider any alternative spellings (American versus English), plurals and abbreviations.

How else might **cognitive behavioural therapy, self esteem** and **eating disorders** be referred to? Include even slight variations – otherwise your search results will exclude them.

How many can you think of? List them here:

TOPIC 1 – cognitive behavioural therapy	TOPIC 2 – self esteem	TOPIC 3 – eating disorders
?	?	?
?	?	?
?	?	?
?	?	?

Now see whether you can make use of any of the following search techniques to help you search more efficiently and comprehensively:

a. Truncation

Using ***** overrides the auto-suggest feature and may help you to more fully understand the terms that will be used in your search.

The symbol is most commonly used at the end of a word to look for variant endings, but in this database ***** can also be used *within* a word to look for alternative spellings e.g. **an*esthetics** will retrieve both **anesthetics** and **anaesthetics**.

In addition it can be used at the beginning of a word to match terms with the same suffix. ***glycemia** finds **hyperglycemia** or **hypoglycemia**.

b. Phrase searching

For an exact phrase search, enter your terms in inverted commas e.g. **"cigarette smoking"**. However, if you want to be more flexible, use the NEXT operator i.e. **cigarette NEXT smoking**. Your search terms will appear next to each other but because of the auto-suggest feature the database will retrieve similar matches as well – for example '…the number of **cigarettes smoked**…'

c. Proximity searching

Known in some other databases as adjacency searching, connecting your search terms with NEAR and a number allows you to search for those words close to (but not necessarily right next to) each other in the text and in either order.

For example: **cigarette NEAR/3 smoking**

This will allow up to 3 words to occur in between your search terms. If you don't state a number, the database will automatically apply the number 6.

To see more information about the Cochrane Library's search features and tips, click the **Search Help** link below the search box.

Exercise 4

Now it is time to enter your words and phrases, one concept at a time, into the database.

Decide which fields you want to search (all text/title, abstract, keywords etc) and make your selection from the drop down menu.

The easiest way to do this is to go to the Advanced search screen by clicking on the **Search** tab.

You can type in more than one search term for each concept in the same line, combining them with OR, like this:

This method is more convenient than running a series of individual searches as you will see when we come to combine them at the end.

Click on **Go** to see your results and remember to click on **Add to Search Manager** so we can use this search again later.

Exercise 5

Now do exactly the same for your cognitive behavioural therapy concept, combining with **OR** if you type more than one search term into the same line. Add the search to the Search Manager.

Exercise 6

Finally, do the same for eating disorders and its synonyms. Combine these using **OR** and add to the Search Manager.

Note: to add another line to your search click on the ⊕ icon after the previous line.
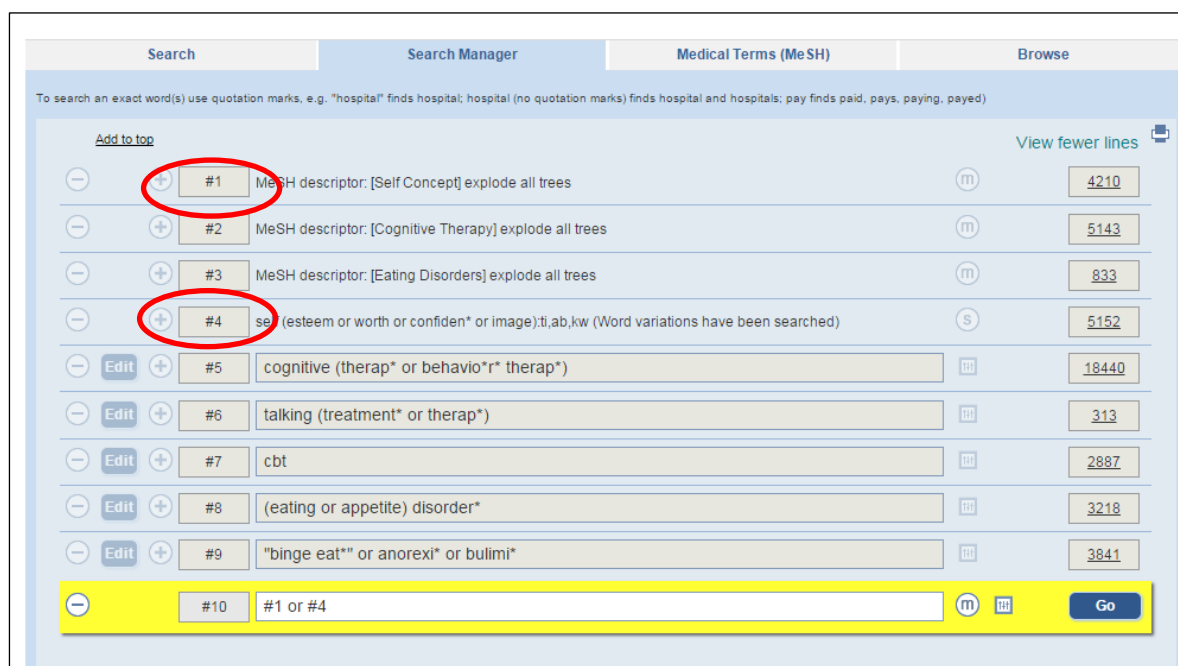
5. Combining your search results

Now that you know how to find some articles, you need to know how to **combine** your search results to be left with one final set of papers that contain **all** your concepts together.

Exercise 7

Click on the **Search Manager** tab to see every search you have carried out so far.

Identify the searches (both subject heading and keywords) you carried out about **self esteem**, type a hash symbol followed by the first set number, then type the word **OR**, then another hash symbol and the other set number and continue for all of the set numbers which correspond with your first concept, as shown below:

Search	Search Manager	Medical Terms (MeSH)	Browse

To search an exact word(s) use quotation marks, e.g. "hospital" finds hospital; hospital (no quotation marks) finds hospital and hospitals; pay finds paid, pays, paying, payed

Add to top   View fewer lines

⊖ ⊕	#1	MeSH descriptor: [Self Concept] explode all trees	(m)	4210
⊖ ⊕	#2	MeSH descriptor: [Cognitive Therapy] explode all trees	(m)	5143
⊖ ⊕	#3	MeSH descriptor: [Eating Disorders] explode all trees	(m)	833
⊖ ⊕	#4	self (esteem or worth or confiden* or image):ti,ab,kw (Word variations have been searched)	(s)	5152
⊖ Edit ⊕	#5	cognitive (therap* or behavio*r* therap*)		18440
⊖ Edit ⊕	#6	talking (treatment* or therap*)		313
⊖ Edit ⊕	#7	cbt		2887
⊖ Edit ⊕	#8	(eating or appetite) disorder*		3218
⊖ Edit ⊕	#9	"binge eat*" or anorexi* or bulimi*		3841
⊖	#10	#1 or #4	(m) 🔲	Go

Click on **Go** to create a combination set, all about our first concept.

Do the same for the **cognitive therapy** concept (in this case type #2 or #5 or #6 or #7) and click on **Go**

Finally, do the same for **eating disorders** concept (type #3 or #8 or #9) and click on **Go**

The final stage is to combine your combination sets!

To do this, just identify your three combination sets – but this time combine them with **AND**.

Type **#10 and #11 and #12** and click on Go

This narrows the search to leave you with one final set of results that contains all your topics together now as shown below:

Click here to view your final results

6. Displaying your search results

When you carry out a search in the Cochrane Library, the records from all the databases are searched simultaneously, but the results will be divided by resource. The total number of results in all Cochrane databases is shown under **All Results**. But the first results you see will be shown from Cochrane Reviews database. To view results matching your search from other databases, click the button next to the one database from the menu on the left.

To view a fuller record for each result, click on its title. It will open in a new window or new tab. Just close it to return to your main list of results.

A typical record from Cochrane Reviews will look like this:

Below is a typical record from the Trials database. Full text is not available for these records inside the

database itself – you need to look at the Source field to see where the full text has been published. Then you need to search for that journal title in the Leeds library catalogue (search@library) to see if we have full text access to it.

The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL) 2012 Issue 3
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Title	A randomized comparison of cognitive behavioral therapy and behavioral weight loss treatment for overweight individuals with binge eating disorder. Links Export Central Citation
Author(s)	Munsch S, Biedert E, Meyer A, Michael T, Schlup B, Tuch A, Margraf J
Source	International journal of eating disorders
Date of Publication	2007 Mar
Volume	40
Issue	2
Pages	102-13
Abstract	OBJECTIVES: The aim of this study was to determine the efficacy of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and behavioral weight loss treatment (BWLT) for overweight patients with binge eating disorder (BED). METHOD: Eighty obese patients meeting criteria of BED according to DSM-IV-TR were randomly assigned to either CBT or BWLT consisting of 16 weekly treatments and 6 monthly follow-up sessions. Binge eating, general psychopathology, and body mass index (BMI) were assessed before, during, and after treatment, and at 12-month follow-up. RESULTS: At posttreatment results favored CBT as the more effective treatment. Analysis of the course of treatments pointed to a faster improvement of binge eating in CBT based on the number of self-reported weekly binges, but faster reduction of BMI in BWLT. At 12-month follow-up, no substantial differences between the two treatment conditions existed. CONCLUSION: CBT was somewhat more efficacious than BWLT in treating binge eating but this superior effect was barely maintained in the long term. Further research into cost effectiveness is needed to assess which treatment should be considered the treatment of choice.
Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)	*Behavior Therapy; Body Mass Index; Bulimia Nervosa [psychology; *therapy]; *Cognitive Therapy; Follow-Up Studies; Obesity [psychology; *therapy]; *Overweight; Patient Compliance [psychology]; Psychopathology; Self Efficacy; Switzerland; *Weight Loss MeSH check words Adult; Female; Humans; Male; Middle Aged
Correspondence Address	Institute of Psychology, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland. simone.munsch@unibas.ch
Accession Number	PUBMED 17089420
DOI	10.1002/eat.20350
Cochrane Group Code	SR-BEHAVMED; SR-DEPRESSN; SR-ENDOC
Language	eng
Publication Type	Comparative Study; Journal Article; Randomized Controlled Trial
ID	CN-00576856

Note – the Cochrane Library does not highlight your search terms in the records so it can be very difficult to see where your terms appear. (Hint: using Control + F on your keyboard or Edit> Find on your internet browser allows you to search for every occurrence of a chosen word – use this to see where your term(s) appear).

7. Author search

If you wish to search for documents written by specific authors, make sure you limit your search to **Author** using the drop down box. Use the format: "perrin n"

8. Browsing the database

You do not have to enter a search term to view documents in The Cochrane Library and can browse the library by common topics or review groups.

Click on the logo to return to the Cochrane Library homepage.
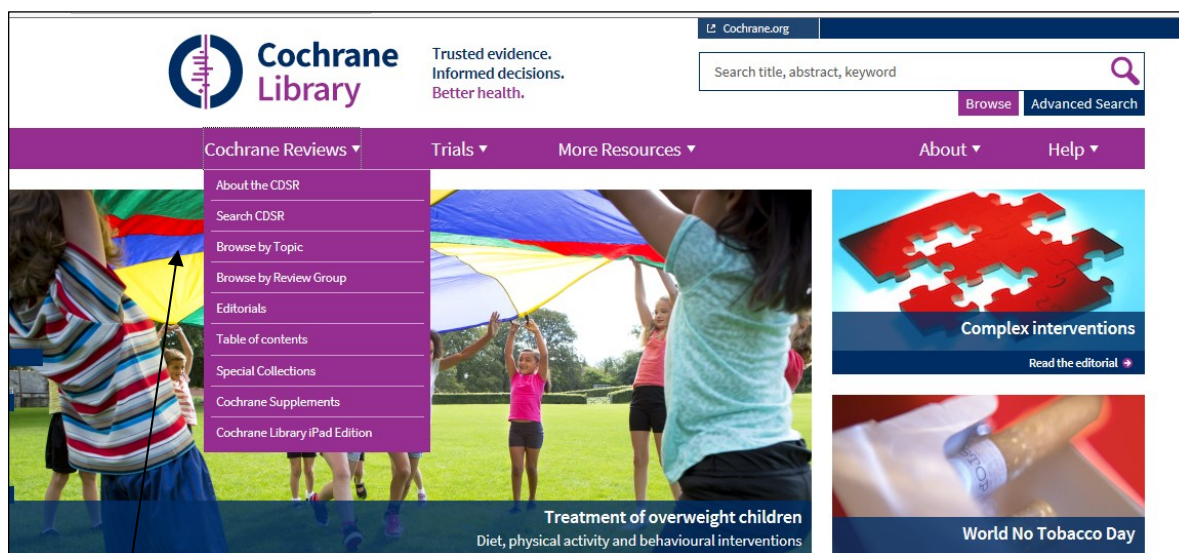
Scroll down from the Cochrane Library homepage and you should see the option to browse systematic reviews by topic:

You can also select to browse by Cochrane Review Group.

9. Printing, saving, sharing and exporting your results (including exporting to Endnote)

Printing: Some documents have a PDF version which you can print out – there will be a PDF button to the left of the full record. Where this is not available, you can use your browser's print function (File>Print) but be aware that some systematic reviews can be very long (over 60 pages).

Saving a document: Where full text is available for your results (e.g. from the Cochrane Reviews database) you can save the PDF to a drive of your choice. If a PDF is not available, you have the option to save the record of information about the document (see section on exporting).

Saving your search strategy: You can only do this if you are logged in to your personal account (see section 2). When you have performed a search, you can then save the strategy by clicking on the <u>Save</u> or <u>Save Strategy</u> button circled in red (depending on which search screen you are using) and follow the prompts. When you want to re-run that saved search, log in to your personal account and re-run the appropriate search.

Sharing your search strategy: (for example with the library or other researchers)

1. Once you've saved your search, click on <u>Strategy Library</u> at the bottom of the page.
2. Then click on the Share icon and click 'send link via email'. Enter the email of the person/people you want to share your search strategy with, and then click send.
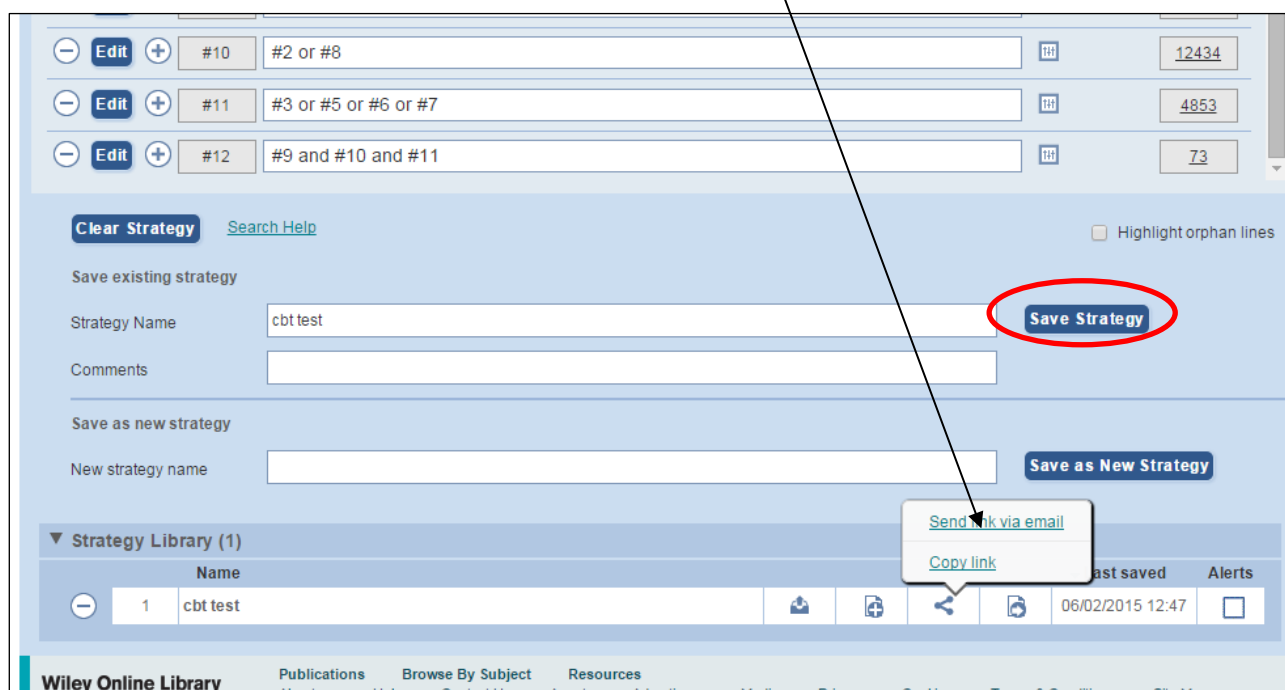
Exporting to EndNote:

From the page on which your results are displayed, select the results you want to export to Endnote by clicking on the box next to the reference on the left hand side so a tick appears.

1. Click on **Export Selected** either at the top or bottom of the page, or if you want to export all of your results, click on Export all.

2. You will then be prompted to **Choose your export options**. Select Export type: **PC** [if using a University desktop computer] and **File type**: **Citation and Abstract**. Then click on **Export Citation**.

3. This will generate a .txt file containing your selected references. When asked: Do you want to open or save citation-export.txt from onlinelibrary.wiley.com? (which will appear at the bottom of your screen) click on **Save**. This file will then be saved to your Downloads folder on your Mdrive.

4. You then need to import this file into Endnote. To do this, go into your Endnote library and click on File > Import > File. Then in the dialogue box click on **Choose** and navigate to your .txt file on your Mdrive (usually in your Downloads folder).

5. Once you have selected your .txt file, click on the arrow on the drop down menu next to **Import Option**, click on **Other filters**, and then select the filter for **Cochrane Library (Wiley)**, select **Choose**, and then **Import**. This will import your references into Endnote.

For more help with using EndNote, see our Endnote support webpages:
https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1403/endnote/43/endnote_support

10. Advice on preparing a Cochrane review

Information is available inside the database for anyone intending to prepare a Cochrane review.

The information is available under **Help**, on the Cochrane Library homepage:

or direct to http://www.cochranelibrary.com/help/how-to-prepare-a-cochrane-review.html.
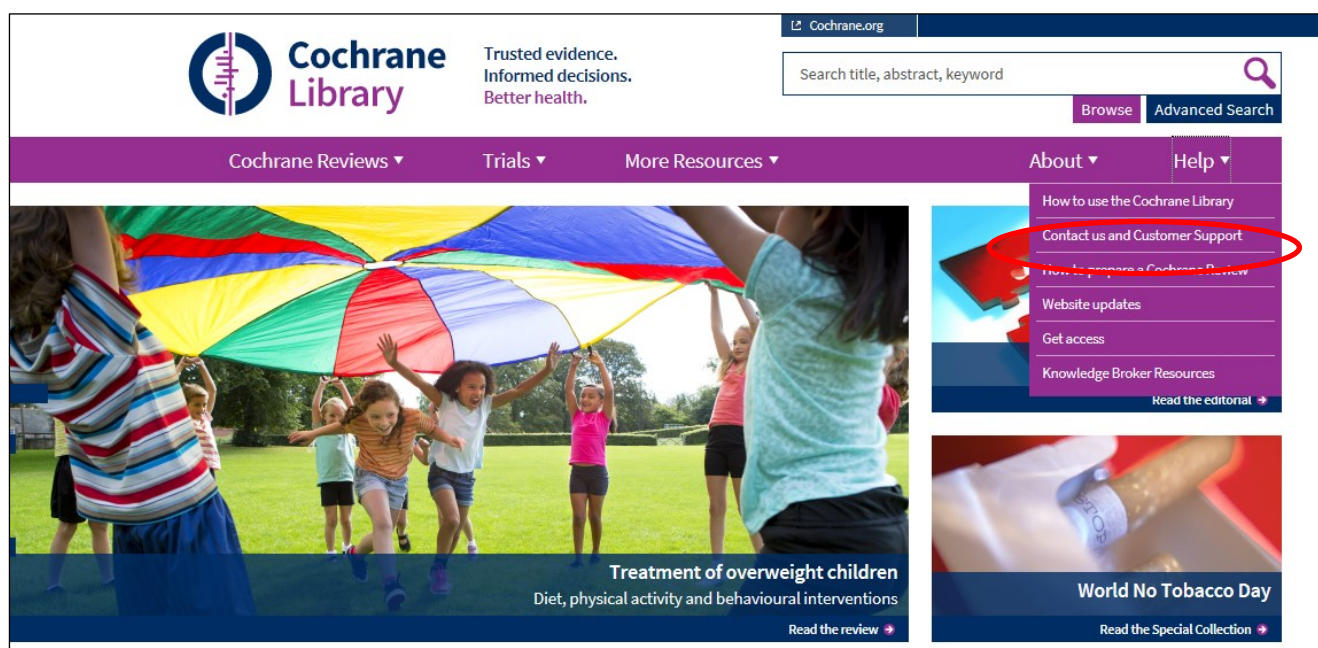
It explains about contacting the relevant Cochrane Review group for support, information about editorial processes and deadlines and provides links to resources including the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions (available direct at http://training.cochrane.org/handbook).