

‘Briefly Summarised’: Research evidence in plain language

The problem

Cochrane Reviews summarise the best available evidence about the effects of healthcare treatments. These reviews include important information for people making decisions about healthcare. But these reviews are difficult to understand.

Our methods

Our summaries are based on qualitative research exploring how non-researchers perceive research evidence; user testing of different plain language summary formats; and a randomised trial of different language summary formats.



Our solution

Staff at Cochrane Norway have worked for over a decade to explore the best ways of summarising Cochrane Reviews in plain language. **Our summaries are aimed at anyone who is interested in the topic but who is not a researcher.** This includes patients and the public but also healthcare providers and policy makers.

Our ‘Briefly Summarised’ format is a 1-2 page summary of a Cochrane Review. It includes:

- An introductory statement making it clear that the information comes from a review, and not from a single study or from expert opinion
- Information about the condition and the healthcare treatment
- A summary of the main findings of the review, using a standard format, presented in both words and numbers, and including an assessment of the certainty of this evidence
- An illustration

How are the summaries used?

Cochrane Norway regularly publishes “Briefly Summarized” in the Norwegian Midwifery Association Journal; the Norwegian Nursing Association Journal; the Norwegian Physiotherapy Journal; and the Norwegian Electronic Health Library. Our work has also informed the development of standards for the reporting of Cochrane Reviews globally.

Can paracetamol relieve osteoarthritis?



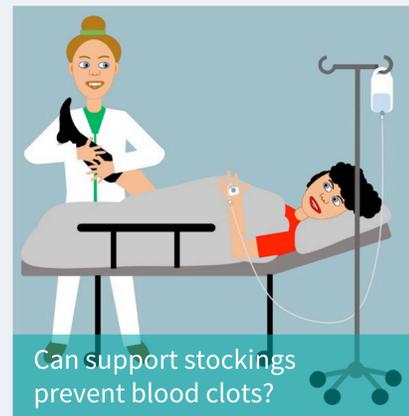
Are general health checks worthwhile?



Should all pregnant women be screened for diabetes?



Can support stockings prevent blood clots?



The Cochrane-Briefly Summarised Project

 Therese Kristine Dalsbø, Marita Sporstøl Fønhus, Claire Glenton, Sarah Rosenbaum, Kristin Thuve Dahm
Cochrane Norway / Norwegian Institute of Public Health

 Take a picture to read more about Cochrane Norway's work


Norwegian Institute of Public Health


Cochrane
Norway