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COVID-19 EVIDENCE MAP

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NEWSLETTER



Norwegian Institute of Public Health

A global resource on COVID-19

There is an urgent need for systematic reviews to guide the many decisions that have to be made during the current pandemic. An increasing number of publications on the coronavirus makes it difficult to navigate the available information.

– A finely categorised map of available research is useful for everyone who wants reliable knowledge about the different aspects of SARS-CoV-2 virus and the COVID-19 pandemic, says Gunn Vist. She is project leader of the *Systematic and living evidence map of COVID-19*. Gunn is a senior researcher at the Norwegian Institute of Public health who has been working with evidence based approaches and systematic reviews for twenty years.

A map of scientific papers categorised according to research topic, population of interest and publication type was launched 3rd April 2020 (see next page). An additional seven “sub-maps”, divided by topic, give more detailed information.

>> [Live map of COVID-19 evidence](#)

– Combining this resource with the most important questions to be answered will be the next step. Our aim is to produce systematic reviews rapidly. If we can find a way of organising production, we should quite quickly have up-to-date evidence for us all to use.

Who are the main target groups and expected users?

- I predict four main user groups, says Gunn:
 - Those who make rapid systematic reviews. Having an up-to-date literature search and list of publications saves time and effort.
 - Those who make guidelines. The map also includes a few completed systematic reviews, both those produced as part of this project and reviews that have already been published.
 - Policy makers. To whom evidence based guidelines should be more rapidly available.
 - Researchers on COVID-19. They can see both what has already been done and where research is missing.

International knowledge resources on COVID-19 are plentiful these days. In which ways does this project differ from the others?

– Yes, there are already many lists of COVID-19 publications available. Most of them have divided the publications into broad themes. We are using the same software as others, but have developed a much more detailed categorisation system. All details of our map will be publicly available.



Gunn Vist, project leader

– We aim to provide frequent updates and a complete collection of current available evidence. There may be close to 4000 peer reviewed published and indexed papers on COVID-19 by the time this newsletter is published. The number is rapidly increasing, so this is an ambitious project.

How is it possible to keep up with the vast increase in publications on COVID-19?

– Work, work, work! We are trying to recruit more people to the project. At the launch of the beta version we were over a week behind publishing, but we still went ahead with the launch, because we hope that it might encourage more people to join in. We aim at being completely up-to-date and ready to start production of rapid systematic review production within two weeks.

– This has turned into a much larger project than I anticipated when first suggesting it. We have a brilliant Norwegian team and we have achieved an incredible amount over the first three weeks. There are thankfully new people now joining the group. We have already partnered with a group at McMaster University, Ontario, Canada, led by Holger Schünemann who are making a systematic and living map of trustworthy guidelines. We are also in discussion with other individuals, institutions and organisations about possible collaboration.

Living maps on COVID-19 evidence

All publications are available in maps organized according to topic and population of interest. The **main map** gives you an overview. More detailed classifications are found in seven topic-maps. You can further sort the publications according to study design through filter functions.

Maps make the distribution of publications on COVID-19 research visible and easy to navigate.

The publications are organized according to topic and population of interest in a matrix system. The colored bubbles in each cell show how many publications there are in each of three categories (systematic reviews, primary and modelling studies, and non-systematic reviews/others).

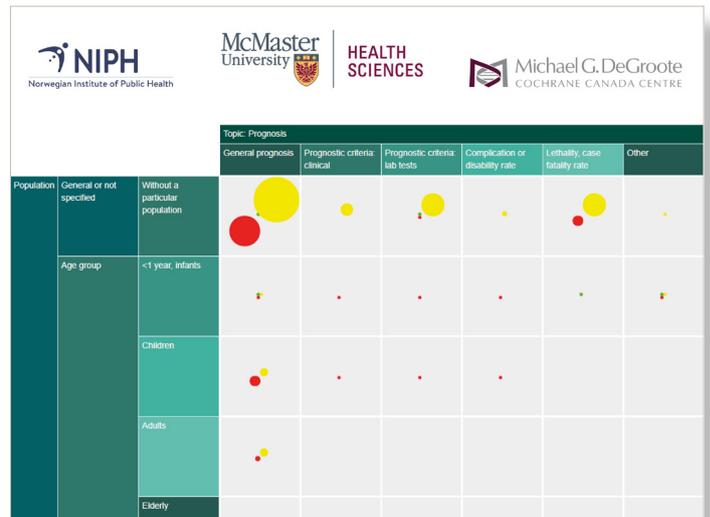
By clicking anywhere in a cell you will access a list of all studies addressing that particular topic and population. Clicking a bubble within that cell you will find studies of a particular publication type. More detailed classification of publication types can be obtained by using the “Filter” function to select for example randomized trials, non-randomized trials, qualitative studies etc.

The list of studies includes for each publication abstract (if available), URL, DOI, author(s) and source (journal).

Seven topic maps give you access to more detailed categories:

- [Etiology](#)
- [Diagnosis](#)
- [Infection prevention and control](#)
- [Interventions to treat the infected patient](#)
- [Interventions targeted at system level](#)
- [Prognosis](#)
- [Experiences and perceptions, social, political, economic aspects](#)

The included publications are found through systematic literature searches in [PubMed](#), supplemented by regular



Systematic and living map on COVID-19 Evidence

updates of material retrieved by searches performed by organizations such as the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO), the Centers for [Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and others. Searches are done every or every other day and the maps are updated weekly.

You will find user guides for each map in the About-section in the top left corner of the screen. At first glance, the maps may look a bit complicated but you have a unique opportunity to find the research you are looking for. We advise you test out the system and search for your particular topics of interest to learn how best to use the maps.

We welcome feedback and suggestions for improvement. Thank you for your interest: Covid-19.evidencemap@fhi.no

RAPID REVIEWS

Four rapid reviews are already published (in Norwegian with English summary):

1. [The role of children in the transmission of covid-19](#)
2. [COVID-19: The relationship between age, comorbidity, and disease severity – a rapid review](#)
3. [SARS-CoV-2, MERS-CoV og SARS-CoV and risk of airborne transmission – a rapid response](#)
4. [Aerosol generating procedures in health care, and COVID-19](#)

Project leader: Gunn Vist
Newsletter editor: Magne Nylenna
Photo: Norwegian Institute of Public Health
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