



CHBG NEWSLETTER

Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group (CHBG)

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UPDATE ON THE COCHRANE HEPATO-BILIARY GROUP ACHIEVEMENTS

Since The 2000 Volume 4, Issue 2, of the CHBG Newsletter we are pleased to inform you about:

Protocols and reviews

Thirty-two protocols and seven reviews are now published in the CHBG Module of The CLib Issue 1, 2001. Until February 26 we are ready to submit additionally four protocols and one systematic review to The CLib Issue 2, 2001. The new protocols and reviews in Issue 1 and 2, 2001 of the Cochrane Library are:

PROTOCOLS

- Alpha-interferon for chronic hepatitis B
- Antibiotic prophylaxis for bacterial infections in cirrhotics with gastrointestinal bleeding
- Glucocorticosteroids for viral hepatitis B
- Glucocorticosteroids for viral hepatitis C
- Anabolic-androgenic steroids for alcoholic liver disease
- Dopaminergic agents for hepatic encephalopathy
- Nonabsorbable disaccharides for hepatic encephalopathy
- Radiofrequency interstitial thermal ablation versus other interventions for hepatocellular carcinoma

REVIEWS

- Chinese medicinal herbs for chronic hepatitis B
- Terlipressin for acute esophageal variceal hemorrhage
- Chinese medicinal herbs for asymptomatic carriers of hepatitis B virus infection

Nineteen other protocols and eleven reviews are undergoing the peer refereeing processes and we expect that they will be published before the end of the year.

Protocols under international peer refereeing:

- Ursodeoxycholic acid and/or antibiotics for prevention of biliary stent occlusion

- Surgical versus endoscopic treatment of bile duct stones
- Vaccines for leptospirosis
- Gamma interferon for chronic hepatitis B
- Thymosin alfa for chronic hepatitis B
- Levamisole for chronic hepatitis B
- Beta-interferon for chronic hepatitis B
- Lamivudine for chronic viral hepatitis B
- Foscarnet for chronic hepatitis B
- Isoprenosin for chronic hepatitis B
- Interventions for paracetamol (acetaminophen) overdose
- Medicinal herbs for hepatitis C virus infection
- Chinese medicinal herbs versus Chinese medicinal herbs for hepatitis B virus infection
- Extracorporeal liver support systems for liver failure
- Surgical versus medical treatment of ascites
- Albendazole and percutaneous needle aspiration for hydatid cyst
- Vaccines for preventing hepatitis A
- Percutaneous ethanol injection or percutaneous acetic acid injection for hepatocellular carcinoma
- Transcatheter arterial chemoembolization for hepatocellular carcinoma

Reviews under international peer refereeing:

- Sphincterotomy for biliary sphincter of Oddi dysfunction
- Colchicine for alcoholic and non-alcoholic liver fibrosis and cirrhosis
- S-adenosyl-L-methionine for alcoholic liver disease
- Propylthiouracil for alcoholic liver disease
- Benzodiazepine receptor antagonists for acute and chronic hepatic encephalopathy
- Ursodeoxycholic acid for primary biliary cirrhosis
- Emergency sclerotherapy versus medical interventions for bleeding esophageal varices in cirrhotics
- Antibiotics for spontaneous bacterial peritonitis in cirrhotics
- Ribavirin with or without alpha interferon versus no intervention, placebo or alpha interferon for chronic hepatitis C
- Interferon for acute hepatitis C
- Interferon for chronic hepatitis C

Further, we have twelve old and eleven new registered titles for systematic reviews which

protocols are due to be prepared and sent to us until the end of the year. Is one or more of them yours?

New registered titles

Everybody who has started with the preparation of a systematic review knows that it takes long to produce one, but the process though planned may even be additionally prolonged if reviewers do not start on time, i.e., immediately after they register their interest and their title is broadcasted within the Collaboration. In this regard we may well advise the authors of already registered titles - Get going! You know that rule number one is to begin. Waiting around for the right mood or inspiration to strike you will not help. Do the searches and get the paper copies, find answers to your questions from the Reviewer's Handbook 4.1.1. (e.g., on RevMan 4.1., web site addresses:

<http://www.cochrane.dk/cochrane/handbook/handbook.htm>

<http://www.update-software.com/ccweb/cochrane/resource.htm>),

your mentor, the CHBG office, etc. Writing has never lamed the thinking and the words will come with the process and the subsequent rule numbers will go without saying. Think of the benefits that the consumers of evidence-based medicine will get; patients want to know what your systematic review will do for them. In short - please, let us hear from you, send your protocols!

Some of the newly registered titles are:

- Interventions for cholestatic pruritus
- Interferon for prevention of hepatocellular carcinoma
- Interventions for unexpected choledocholithiasis observed during laparoscopic cholecystectomy
- UDCA with or without extracorporeal shock wave treatment for gallbladder stones
- Ribavirin with alpha interferon at different doses and different durations for chronic hepatitis C
- Extracorporeal liver support for liver insufficiency
- Preoperative biliary drainage for obstructive jaundice

Handsearching

We thank Daniel Galandi and Christine Scholtyssek for sending us relevant hepato-biliary references from *Endoskopie Heute* and *Gastroenterologisches Journal* (former title: 'Deutsche Zeitschrift für Verdauungs- und Stoffwechselkrankheiten'). They handsearched the first journal from 1988 (first year of publication) to 1999, and the second from 1948 to 1991, respectively. Both of the journals are registered with the German Cochrane Centre.

Handsearch results were also submitted by CHBG handsearchers for Endoscopy, Gut, Hepatology, Journal of

Hepatology, Liver, and Seminars in Liver Disease.

Newly registered journals

Transplantation Proceedings – Sarah Frederiksen has submitted the handsearch results for 1969. She will handsearch the journal prospectively.

The International Workshop on Portal Hypertention Conference Proceedings – Dimitrinka Nikolova submitted the results for 1986.

Handsearch results from the other registered journals do not come as often as we wish to, but the handsearching activity is not in a standstill either.

Citations database

The CHBG specialised citation database contains bibliographic details of 13,791 studies. Of these, 12,095 studies have all been coded for study design. By the end of February 2001, the database comprised 6,011 randomised clinical trials (RCT), 417 controlled clinical trials (CCT), and 686 'second opinion ought to be sought*' (CCT) trials.

*Clinical trials that may be classified as a RCT or CCT, but in which a second opinion is sought preferably after contact to the authors.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Past events

The good thing with any kind of meetings is that they bring you face to face with people and ideas that fill you with inspiration, encouragement, and the will to achieve when you come back to your work place.

Sarah Frederiksen relates to us her experience from her first Cochrane colloquium in Cape Town.

The 8th Cochrane Colloquium, Cape Town, October 2000

This year's Cochrane Colloquium took place in the beautiful scenery of Cape Town. Representing the Hepato-Biliary Group were our review group co-ordinator, Dimitrinka Nikolova, our data-manager, Nader Salasshahri, our assistant coordinator, Ninna Frydendal and myself. Associate professor, dr.med.sci. Jianping Liu, our guest-reviewer from China was also present. The CHBG presented five

posters – four by Jianping Liu and one by myself.

As a fairly newcomer in the Cochrane Collaboration this was my first Cochrane Colloquium and my first opportunity to meet many of the people that I am corresponding with during my daily work as a trial search co-ordinator (TSC). It was nice finally to get a face on names.

This Colloquium gave me a lot to take with me back home. I found it very educational to get a chance to discuss general issues and problems with other editorial team members – especially other TSCs - during the well-organised meetings and workshops. From the plenary session I also learned a lot of things about the Cochrane Collaboration and the invaluable work we are doing all over the world.

This was also my first time presenting a poster and I must admit that it was a very special and nice feeling to get response on the work in which I had put so much effort in months before the colloquium.

Besides the scientific programme we all had the time to explore and enjoy the wonderful atmosphere in and around Cape Town. South Africa is a very nice place and I would love to go back.

In summary, the Colloquium was a great opportunity for us in CHBG to get new stimuli and learn new skills. We are already looking forward to seeing you all in Lyon, October 2001 (see below).

Sarah Louise Frederiksen, Trial Search Coordinator

8th Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Meeting during the 51st Annual American Association for the Study of the Liver Diseases (AASLD) Meeting in Dallas, USA 2000, Wyndham Anatole Hotel, Dallas, Texas.

The CHBG had a three-hours meeting on 30, October 2000 during the annual AASLD meeting. Ronald Koretz and Christian Gluud chaired the meeting. As every other meeting it offered a forum to present and discuss some of the latest liver-related research presented in the form of Cochrane systematic reviews. Thus, Bodil Als-Nielsen, Lise Lotte Kjaergård, George Ioannou, Sammy Saab and Christian Gluud presented reviews they are presently working on in collaboration with Kim Krogsgaard, Ronald Koretz, Jenny Doust, Don Rockey, and Jose Niento.

Future Events

European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) Meeting in Prague, Czech Republic, April 18-22, 2001

More information at: <http://www.easl2001.cz>

One-Day Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group (CHBG) Symposium - Tuesday, April 17th, Prague 2001 from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. – a premeeting EASL activity

In our previous newsletter we informed you that the Scientific Committee of the EASL has approved and ratified a one-day CHBG symposium on evidence-based medicine in Prague this year. You may access the programme at <http://www.easl2001.cz/registration_frame.htm>. It is never too late to register. We did our best to advertise the event through daily correspondence, previous newsletters, and through sending out almost 200 EASL brochures with information to CHBG members. Thanks to the EASL sponsorship, one-page with the programme will appear in the March issue of the Journal of Hepatology. The preliminary programme was also distributed among participants at the EASL and AASLD meetings last year.

You may register online from the following page: <http://easl2000.com/>

The CHBG will also be presented at the EASL exhibition 2001 with a booth. The exhibition days and hours will be April 18 from 08.00 to 19.00 hours, April 19,20,21 from 07.30 to 18.30. hours on April 22 from 7.30. You are very much welcome to pay us a visit there.

Further, the CHBG submitted six abstracts for EASL and achieved six poster presentations.

9th International Annual Cochrane Colloquium 9-13 October 2001, Palais des Congrès, Lyon, France

Information is to be found at:
http://spc-10.univ-lyon1.fr/citccf/colloque2001/ANGLAIS/Sommaire_ang.htm

The deadline for submission of abstracts is 30 April 2001.

The deadline for registration is:

Early registration deadline	before 15 June
Full registration deadline	before 30 August
Late registration	after 30 August
On site registration	9-13 October
1-day registration	

American Association for the Study of the Liver Diseases (AASLD) Meeting

52nd Annual Meeting and Postgraduate Course

November 9-13, 2001
Wyndham Anatole Hotel
Dallas, Texas, USA

The deadline for abstract submittals is Friday, June 8, 2001 (11:59PM ET)

More information at: <http://www.aasld.org>

As every other year, the CHBG will hold again the traditional three-hour meeting during the AASLD meeting. Details in regard to the programme will follow in the next issue of the CHBG Newsletter.

DATABASES:

LILACS

LILACS is an electronic database (CD-ROM and On-line) that indexes Latin American and Caribbean regional literature from more than 670 journals. Of the 670 journals indexed in LILACS, only 41 overlap with MEDLINE/EMBASE. Using the Brazilian Cochrane Centre website (<http://www.epm.br/cochrane>) you can have free access to the information on how to search the LILACS database on-line: numbers of records, step-by-step instructions, web form, search strategy for RCTs, references and contact.

JOURNALS – COPUBLICATIONS

THE LANCET

Mike Clerk, Chair, Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group, has resent a letter to all Cochrane editorial team offices that he and Iain Chalmers had received about the Lancet's new policy on the publication of material based on Cochrane Reviews.

The letter is from Richard Horton, the Editor of the Lancet

Dear Mike and Iain

I am writing following our very positive conversation yesterday about The Lancet's policy regarding Cochrane systematic reviews.

We agreed two important facts. First, that there is overwhelming evidence that Cochrane reviews are of higher quality than non-Cochrane reviews. Second, that, for the time being at least, Cochrane is not always successful at

disseminating the results of these reviews to the people who need them often ordinary doctors.

The Lancet's existing agreement with Cochrane is to seek parallel publication of a Cochrane review in The Lancet and on the Cochrane Library. A nice idea, but it rarely works. I would like to propose this:

The Lancet would welcome submission of completed and approved Cochrane reviews, published on the Cochrane Library or not, for subsequent publication in The Lancet. Prior publication on the Cochrane Library is not an issue for us at all. We would wish for a paper fitting our usual MS requirements and we would, as we discussed, put that paper through the journal's own peer review process. The likelihood is that, if the paper was eventually accepted, it would differ from the Cochrane Library version.

The Collaboration has, I understand, no difficulty with that possible outcome. A reference and a web link would be made to the original Cochrane review to ensure that no reader/user became confused about dual publication.

My personal hope is that this new policy will not only increase the number of high-quality systematic reviews published in The Lancet but also help to disseminate Cochrane reviews to doctors. I'd be pleased to hear the response within Cochrane to this idea - obviously we won't be able to publish 100% of what we receive, but we would hope to publish a fair proportion!

All the best, Richard

JAMA

Mike Clarke, Chair, Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group sent us a letter saying that Drummond Rennie on behalf of JAMA has agreed that his letter can be circulated within the Cochrane Collaboration.

Dear Mike,

I have drawn your recent correspondence with Richard Horton, of the Lancet, to the attention of Dr Cathy DeAngelis, editor in chief of JAMA, and

the other JAMA editors.

We, too, recognize that there is good evidence that Cochrane Reviews are better than other systematic reviews and we wish to attract the best of these. We have examined our journal policies and feel that they provide very few barriers to good new Cochrane reviews at the cutting edge of medicine.

As before, JAMA welcomes systematic reviews and manuscripts from the Cochrane Collaboration, and has published these in the past. Our policy concerning such manuscripts is that in general, we like to publish the message in JAMA before it appears in the Cochrane Library. However, we handle all manuscripts on an individual basis and are certainly prepared to consider for publication manuscripts describing reviews that have already appeared in the Library. Obviously, the message of the two reports will be the same but the two documents would have many differences. We would, of course, get peer review and usually require revision.

JAMA has an excellent record of publishing systematic reviews and we intend to continue this.

I send my best regards,

Drummond Rennie, MD. Deputy Editor, JAMA.

The Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine

The Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent medicine is extremely interested in systematic reviews and meta-analyses of pediatric diagnostic tests, therapies, and other interventions.

Submitted manuscripts will be promptly and expeditiously reviewed. We welcome questions regarding the journals potential interest in topics prior to submission and are willing to publish reviews that have been included in the Cochrane database.

Please reply to:
Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine
Child Health Institute
University of WA
146 N. Canal St. Suite 300
Seattle WA 98103, USA

Phone: 001 206 685-3573

Fax: 001 206 685-3572

USEFUL FOR REVIEWERS

Citing Internet publications in Cochrane Reviews

Below is an example of how to cite Internet publications in Cochrane Reviews.

Publications on the Internet:

Reference type
Other

Authors: Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and UK Cochrane Centre

English title: Controlled trials from history

Original title:

Journal/book/source: www.rcpe.ac.uk/cochrane/

Date of publication: (accessed 10 May 2000)

Volume:

Issue:

Pages:

Edition:

Editor(s):

Publisher name:

City of publication:

Medium:

MEDLINE ID:

Other ID numbers:

Unpublished notes:

This will be output as:

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and UK Cochrane Centre. Controlled trials from history. www.rcpe.ac.uk/cochrane/ (accessed 10 May 2000).

VISITS

Gennaro D'Amico, a CHBG reviewer from Italy, paid us a short visit on January the 10th, 2001. A three-hours meeting was arranged at which he presented his work on the systematic review 'Emergency sclerotherapy versus medical interventions for bleeding esophageal varices in

cirrhotics'. The discussions on the review were really fruitful.

Andrea Rambaldi, Italy, is another reviewer who stayed with us for ten days in early February working on systematic reviews.

COMPUTING NEWS

The CHBG's web site will be updated in the mid March. Please have a look at:

<http://inet.uni2.dk/~ctucph/chbg/index.htm> and share with us your opinion. Comments and advice are highly welcomed.

The Cochrane Collaboration's web site has moved to:

<http://www.cochrane.de/cochrane/ccweb.htm>

POSTSCRIPT

For almost five years, the *CHBG newsletter* has tried to be a wellspring of information, ideas, and encouragement for CHBG members. In each newsletter we have tried to balance the included topics so that interests be satisfied. If you, however, have wishes, ideas, then do write to us.

The CHBG newsletter is also a way for the editorial team of the CHBG to reach members who are in our files because of their involvement as peer referees, consumers of the results of the systematic reviews, or just because of their wish to stay on the list since they are not indifferent to the work of the group and wish to follow its achievements. To be a CHBG member or becoming a CHBG member requires and will require very little work on your part, but your involvement will have a profound impact on the development and completely winning the recognition of practicing evidence-based medicine.

Herewith we would like to acknowledge the enormous help obtained from The 1991 Pharmacy Foundation, The Danish Medical Research Council and the Copenhagen Hospital Corporation who helped and help us to exist.

This CHBG Newsletter in paper and electronic version is prepared with the mutual efforts of the staff of The Editorial Team Office in Copenhagen, Denmark, consisting of: Christian Gluud - Co-ordinating Editor, Dimitrinka Nikolova - Review Group Co-ordinator, Sarah Frederiksen - Trial Search Co-ordinator, Nader Salassahri - IT advisor, and Hojat Ebrahimi - IT co-worker.

Feel free to express your opinion, send comments, or material that you would like to get published in forthcoming issues any time. For contact - write, phone, fax or email to: The CHBG, The Copenhagen Trial Unit, Dept. 77.01. H:S Rigshospitalet, Blegdamsvej 9, DK-2100 Copenhagen, Denmark. Tel. +45 3545 7169 Fax +45 3545 7101 Email: chbg@ctu.rh.dk