

# CHBG NEWSLETTER

Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group (CHBG)

Volume 4, Issue 2

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## Update on The Cochrane Hepato- Biliary Group achievements

During the five years of existence of the CHBG, reviewers have made great scientific endeavours to produce interesting and good-quality protocols and reviews. This is evident from the 72 protocols and reviews, published on The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews\*, as well as from the number of protocols and reviews presently undergoing editorial processing.

The **new reviews** in Issue 4, 2001 are:

- Benzodiazepine receptor antagonists for acute and chronic hepatic encephalopathy,
- Medicinal herbs for hepatitis C virus infection,
- S-adenosyl-L-methionine for alcoholic liver diseases.

The **new protocols** in Issue 4, 2001 are:

- Interventions for paracetamol (acetaminophen) overdose,
- Surgical versus endoscopic treatment of bile duct stones.

The **new registered titles** since the 2001 February Issue of the CHBG Newsletter with the contact reviewer's name are provided below:

- Antibiotics for cholangitis - Renata Kukuruzovic, Australia.
- Amantadine with or without interferon for hepatitis C - Gilmar Amorim, Brazil.
- Amantadine with peg interferon for hepatitis C - Gilmar Amorim, Brazil.
- Behavioural interventions for preventing hepatitis B and/or C - Peninnah Oberdorfer, Australia.

\* See The Cochrane Library Issue 4, 2001.

For more information visit:

<http://www.update-software.com/Cochrane/default.HTM>

- Albumin and other plasma expanders for ascites in cirrhotic patients - Rosanna Simonetti, Italy.
- Drainage-free versus routine drainage for laparoscopic cholecystectomy - Yu Zheng Yang, China.
- Drainage-free versus routine drainage for cholecystectomy in open operation - Yu Zheng Yang, China.
- Hepatitis B vaccination in patients with chronic renal failure - James Zacharias, Canada.
- Interferon for hepatitis D virus infection - Zahari Krastev, Bulgaria.
- Interferon for relapsing and non-responding patients with chronic hepatitis C - Robert Myers, France.
- Immunoglobulins for preventing hepatitis A - Jianping Liu, China.
- Nucleoside analogues with or without interferon for chronic hepatitis C - Gilmar Amorim, Brazil.
- Operation versus non-operation interventions for asymptomatic cholecystolithiasis - Yu Zheng Yang, China.
- Primary suture (or T-tube free bile duct exploration) versus routine T-tube drainage for choledochostomy in open operation - Yu Zheng Yang, China.
- Primary suture (or T-tube free laparoscopic bile duct exploration) versus routine T-tube drainage for laparoscopic choledochostomy - Yu Zheng Yang, China.
- Thymosin alfa with or without interferon for hepatitis C - Gilmar Amorim, Brazil.
- Triple therapy of amantadine, interferon, and ribavirin for chronic hepatitis C - Gilmar Amorim, Brazil.

Some of the **reviews expected** on The Cochrane Library Issue 1 or 2 of 2002:

- Propylthiouracil for alcoholic liver disease - Andrea Rambaldi, Italy.
- Interferon for chronic hepatitis C - Thierry Poinard, France.
- Surgical versus endoscopic treatment of bile duct stones - David Vernon, Australia.
- Sequential combination of glucocorticosteroids and alfa interferon versus alfa interferon alone for chronic hepatitis B - Martin Møllerup, Denmark.
- Vaccines for preventing hepatitis B in high-

- risk newborn infants - Elizabeth Boxall, UK.
- Ursodeoxycholic acid for primary biliary cirrhosis - Christian Gluud, Denmark.
- Interventions for paracetamol (acetaminophen) overdose - Jesper Brok, Denmark.
- Interferon for acute hepatitis C - Thierry Poinard, France.
- Emergency sclerotherapy versus medical interventions for bleeding esophageal varices in cirrhotic patients - Gennaro D'Amico, Italy.
- Ribavirin with or without alpha interferon versus no intervention, placebo, or alpha interferon for chronic hepatitis C - Lise Lotte Kjaergård, Denmark.
- Antibiotic prophylaxis for bacterial infections in cirrhotics with gastrointestinal bleeding - Karla Soares Weiser, Israel.
- Radiofrequency thermal ablation versus other interventions for hepatocellular carcinoma - Daniel Galandi, Germany.
- Ursodeoxycholic acid and/or antibiotics for prevention of biliary stent occlusion - Daniel Galandi, Germany.
- Bile acids for viral hepatitis - Wendong Chen, Denmark.

Some of the **protocols expected** on Issue 1 or 2 of 2002

- Milk thistle for liver diseases - Andrea Rambaldi, Italy.
- Thymosin alfa for chronic hepatitis B - Humberto Saconato, Brazil.
- Extracorporeal liver support for liver insufficiency - Jianping Liu, China.
- Surgical versus medical treatment of refractory ascites - Sammy Saab, USA.
- Glucocorticosteroids for primary biliary cirrhosis - Martin Prince, UK.
- Interferon for relapsing and non-responding patients with chronic hepatitis C - Robert Myers, France.
- Weight reduction for treatment of non-alcoholic fatty liver - Rex Wang, USA.
- Preoperative biliary drainage for obstructive jaundice - Jane McCall, USA.
- Foscarnet for chronic hepatitis B - Humberto Saconato, Brazil.
- Interferon for hepatocellular carcinoma - Rosanna Simonetti, Italy.
- Albumin and other plasma expanders for ascites in cirrhotic patients - Rosanna

Simonetti, Italy.

- Gamma interferon for chronic hepatitis B - Humberto Saconato, Brazil.
- Lamivudine for chronic hepatitis B - Humberto Saconato, Brazil.
- Levamisole for chronic hepatitis B - Humberto Saconato, Brazil.
- Prophylactic endoscopic sclerotherapy for oesophageal varices - John Fardy, Canada.
- Immunoglobulins for preventing hepatitis A - Jianping Liu, China.
- Isoprinosine for chronic hepatitis B - Humberto Saconato, Brazil.

The reason for not giving all the titles of protocols and reviews that should be submitted before January 2002 for editorial processing that would lead to publication is that not all reviewers have confirmed their readiness for submission. We, at the Editorial Team Office, would have liked to get more often feedback from reviewers performing systematic reviews.

#### **Cochrane Library: key dates for 2002**

<b>Issue no.</b>	<b>Submission deadline*</b>	<b>Release date</b>
2002 - 1	28.11.2001	21.01.2002
2002 - 2	27.02.2002	22.04.2002
2002 - 3	29.05.2002	22.07.2002
2002 - 4	28.08.2002	21.10.2002

\*In order to be sure that your peer refereed protocol or review can meet these dates for publication on The Cochrane Library, it has to be submitted in a finalized form to The CHBG Editorial Team Office at least three weeks in advance.

#### **News from Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group:**

##### **Complimentary copies of The Cochrane Library**

A letter sent by Mike Clarke

In light of the decision and subsequent announcement made earlier this year that, from Issue 2, 2002 of The Cochrane Library, complimentary CD-ROMS will only be sent to contact reviewers who have at least one "up-

to-date" review in The Cochrane Library, I have been working with Hazim from Update Software to identify the contact reviewers who will not be automatically sent a complimentary CR-ROM disk from Issue 2, 2002 onwards, unless at least one of their reviews is brought "up-to-date" before the submission for that issue. For these purposes, an "up-to-date" review means one that satisfies at least one of the following:

- The review was first published in or more recently than Issue 4, 1999 of The Cochrane Library (that is, 10 Issues before Issue 2, 2002)

OR

- The "date of last substantive update" is more recent than 5 September 1999

OR

- The "date of new studies sought but none found" is more recent than 5 September 1999

OR

- The "date new studies found and included or excluded" is more recent than 5 September 1999

With best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

Mike Clarke  
Deputy Chair, Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group

Furthermore, there is a new Cochrane policy on updating reviews. It says that Cochrane reviews should be updated at least once every two years and if not, the reviews have to be removed from The Cochrane Library. The framework also applies to protocols.

The CHBG Editorial Team Office hopes that this information will highlight the achievements of the CHBG reviewers in the preparation of systematic reviews and will serve as an inspiration to many novice and experienced researchers and practitioners interested in scientific research in evidence-based medicine.

##### **Suggested web addresses**

For those who wish to learn more about the art of preparation of systematic reviews, suggested web addresses (the last one of which contains also selective bibliography of general material for tuition) are provided below:

For information on the Cochrane Collaboration, see: [www.cochrane.de](http://www.cochrane.de)

For consumer information see: [www.cochraneconsumer.com](http://www.cochraneconsumer.com)

For little gems from The Cochrane Library, see: [http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/cochrane\\_gems/archives.asp](http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/cochrane_gems/archives.asp)

For basic principles applying to the construction of search profiles for use on Internet search engines or on any on-line database searches, see: [http://www.frame-uk.demon.co.uk/guide/search\\_basics.htm](http://www.frame-uk.demon.co.uk/guide/search_basics.htm)

For access to an international database of ongoing randomised controlled trials in all areas of healthcare see: <http://www.controlled-trials.com/>

For access to the core library for evidence-based practice publications see: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~scharr/ir/core.html>

### Handsearching

There are no new journals registered since the February Issue of this Newsletter and there has been a decline in submission of handsearch results. Sarah Frederiksen, the Handsearch Coordinator, is from September 2001 on maternity leave, and Dimitrinka Nikolova, the Review Group Coordinator, has taken over the handsearch coordinator's tasks during Sarah's absence. Ninna Frydendall is continuing processing handsearch submissions. In case of interest in new journals or questions/help needed, please contact Dimitrinka.

### Past events

#### The CHBG one-day symposium, Prague - 17 April 2001

The CHBG run a one-day EASL-sponsored symposium in Prague on evidence-based medicine on 17 April 2001. Around 350 people were present. The speakers were William Rosenberg, UK; Thierry Poynard, France; Luigi Pagliaro, Italy; Rosanna Simonetti, Italy; Ulrich Tröhler, Switzerland, Andrew Burroughs, UK; Bodil Als-Nielsen, Denmark; Christian Gluud, Denmark; Lise Lotte Kjaergard, Denmark; Torben Jørgensen,

Denmark; Gennaro D'Amico, Italy; Ronald Koretz, USA and Robert Sutton, UK.

The symposium was a great success and EASL secretary, Jordi Bruix, has kindly expressed that he found this symposium a highly satisfactory event and this means that it is definitely worth continuing this type of event, as it is beneficial both for The CHBG and EASL.

The CHBG had also a booth at the EASL exhibition from 18.04 to 22.04.2001. New members of the CHBG were recruited. We thank all who visited the booth and expressed their interest in participating in the work of The CHBG.

#### Cochrane editing workshop, Copenhagen - 6 to 8 Sept 2001

Dimitrinka Nikolova, Lise Lotte Kjaergard, and Christian Gluud represented The CHBG. Many relevant questions were discussed and among them was the one on open versus anonymous peer refereeing. Most of the participants were for open peer refereeing since knowing the identity of authors and not vice versa, increases the risk of abuse. In this connection we will appreciate if you could share with us your own thoughts. All the comments received will be summarized to provide you with a feedback. Empirical evidence has shown that the quality of open peer refereeing is as good as concealed peer refereeing. If we do not get a storm of protest, The CHBG will introduce open peer refereeing during 2002.

### Visits

**Rosanna Simonetti**, a CHBG reviewer and associate editor of The CHBG, from Italy, came to Copenhagen in September to work for two months on three systematic reviews. The topics are: - Albumin and other plasma expanders for ascites in cirrhotic patients; Interferon for hepatocellular carcinoma; and Interferon for prevention of hepatocellular carcinoma.

**Andrea Rambaldi**, a CHBG reviewer from Italy, visited The CHBG in October for a week to work on the systematic reviews entitled 'Propylthiouracil for alcoholic liver disease' and 'Anabolic-androgenic steroids for alcoholic liver disease'.

**Wendong Chen**, a CHBG reviewer from China,

is another guest who will stay with The CHBG for six months to perform systematic reviews.

Having international collaborators is an ideal

opportunity to exchange knowledge and create a working place of energy and discussion. Finally, we all enjoy satisfaction in what has been accomplished.

**From The CHBG history files:**

**CHBG meetings during the years (1995 - onwards)**

Meeting	Date	Town	Country	Place/Event
1 <sup>st</sup> Exploratory meeting -	1993-10-13	Copenhagen	Denmark	Institute of Preventive Medicine
2 <sup>nd</sup> Exploratory meeting	1994-10-8	Athens	Greece	EASL
3 <sup>rd</sup> Exploratory meeting	1995-08-19	Baveno	Italy	Baveno II
4 <sup>th</sup> Exploratory meeting	1995-08-19	Copenhagen	Denmark	EASL
5 <sup>th</sup> Exploratory meeting	1995-11-06	Chicago	USA	AASLD
1 <sup>st</sup> CHBG meeting	1996-08-25	Geneva	Switzerland	EASL
2 <sup>nd</sup> CHBG meeting	1996-11-10	Chicago	USA	AASLD
3 <sup>rd</sup> CHBG meeting	1997-04-12	London	UK	EASL
4 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	1997-11-08	Chicago	USA	AASLD
5 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	1998-04-18	Lisbon	Portugal	EASL
6 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	1998-11-09	Chicago	USA	AASLD
7 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	1999-04-11	Napels	Italy	EASL
8 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	1999-11-08	Dallas	USA	AASLD
9 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	2000-04-29	Rotterdam	Holland	EASL
10 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	2000-10-30	Dallas	USA	AASLD
11 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting (One-day CHBG symposium on evidence-based medicine)	2001-04-17	Prague	The Czech Republic	EASL
12 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	2001-11-12	Dallas	USA	AASLD
13 <sup>th</sup> CHBG meeting	2002-04-?	Madrid	Spain	EASL

**Future events**

**AASLD meeting**

There is a letter from Dr. Schiff regarding the AASLD meeting 2001 and we have copied the text of the letter below. For further details of the meeting please check [www.aasld.org](http://www.aasld.org).

**Important 2001 annual meeting announcement**

All of us at AASLD are deeply saddened by the recent tragedies in New York City, Washington, D.C. and southwestern Pennsylvania, and we extend our sympathies and condolences to those affected. At this time, AASLD is continuing its plans to conduct the Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas

November 9 -13, 2001. Should current events change, we will keep you apprised of the

meeting's status via this Web site.

As it is the practice now since 1995, **The CHBG** will hold its **12<sup>th</sup> meeting on November 12 in Dallas, Chicago** and the preliminary programme is also presented. We will be happy to see as many as possible.

**PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME  
OF  
THE 12<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL COCHRANE HEPATO-BILIARY GROUP MEETING**

**6:15 P.M.- 9:00 P.M. on Monday, November 12 in the Obelisk A room,  
Wyndham Anatole Hotel, Dallas, USA**

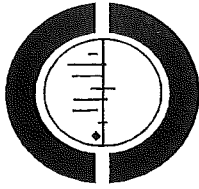
Chairs: Ronald Koretz and Christian Gluud

1.	6:15 P.M. - 6:20 P.M.	Welcome.	Koretz R, Gluud C.
2.	6:20 P.M. - 6:45 P.M.	Anabolic-androgenic steroids for alcoholic liver disease. A Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Systematic Review.	Rambaldi A, Iaquinto G*, Gluud C.
3.	6:45 P.M. - 7:05 P.M.	Propylthiouracil for alcoholic liver disease. A Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Systematic Review.	Rambaldi A, Gluud C*.
4.	7:05 P.M. - 7:25 P.M.	Nonabsorbable disaccharides for hepatic encephalopathy. A Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Systematic Review.	Als-Nielsen B*, Kjaergard LL, Gluud C.
5.	7:25 P.M. - 7:45 P.M.	Extracorporeal liver support systems for liver failure. A Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Systematic Review.	Liu JP, Kjaergard LL, Als-Nielsen B*, Gluud C.
6.	7:45 P.M. - 8:05 P.M.	What can go wrong in a randomized trial: lessons from a meta-analysis?	Koretz R*.
7.	8:05 P.M. - 8:25 P.M.	Emergency sclerotherapy versus medical interventions for bleeding esophageal varices in cirrhotic patients. A Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group Systematic Review.	D'Amico G*, Pietrosi G, Tarantino I, Pagliaro L.
8.	8:25 P.M. - 8:45 P.M.	Ursodeoxycholic acid for primary biliary cirrhosis and viral hepatitis – compared and contrasted.	Gluud C*, Christensen E, Liu JP, Chen W.
9.	8:45 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.	Discussions and closure.	

\* Presenting the topic.

*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. All CHBG Newsletters are also published electronically on The CHBG homepage: <<http://inet.uni2.dk/~ctucph/chbg>>. There are two issues per year.*

**IMPORTANT:** From 12.11.01 The Editorial Team Office of The CHBG will be located in another building. There is a slight change in the postal address, so please use this one, that is:  
The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group, The Copenhagen Trial Unit, Department 71.01.  
H:S Rigshospitalet, Blegdamsvej 9, DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark.  
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## Cochrane Hepato Biliary Group

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01.10.2001

Dear present and future members of The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group,

It is our pleasure to invite you to participate in the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group's meeting in affiliation with The American Association for The Study of The Liver Diseases (AASLD).

The Meeting will be held in Dallas on Monday 12 November 2001, in the Obelisk A room at Wyndham Anatole Hotel, Dallas, USA.

The Meeting programme consists of oral presentations given by B. Als-Nielsen, G. D'Amico, C. Glud, G. Inquinto, and R. Koretz as invited speakers and authors of the systematically reviewed papers. Besides the presentations the Meeting will also provide a forum for exchange of ideas and findings for researchers in the field of evidence-based medicine on international level.

The first Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group's meeting was arranged in Europe in 1996. The subsequent meetings in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 were convened twice a year in connection with the annual meetings of The European Association for The Study of The Liver (EASL) and The American Association for The Study of The Liver Diseases (AASLD).

Welcome to The CHBG meeting 2001 in Dallas, USA!

With best regards,

Christian Glud  
Coordinating Editor  
The CHBG