



CHBG NEWSLETTER

Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group (CHBG)

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UPDATE ON THE COCHRANE HEPATO-BILIARY GROUP ACHIEVEMENTS

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In the past six months, the members of the Editorial Team of the CHBG continued to live and work with great new and old expectations in respect to the long preparation process which the systematic reviews require, also expanding the Specialized Trials Register of the Group with more relevant controlled clinical trials identified by handsearching specialist literature and electronic literature searches (including The Cochrane Library (CL)), and not in the last place by attracting more people to work for the goals of the Cochrane Collaboration in general, and the CHBG in particular.

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Protocols and reviews

Twenty-two protocols and three reviews are published in the CHBG Module of The CL1999 Issue 3. At present, four protocols (Colchicine for alcoholic and non-alcoholic liver fibrosis and cirrhosis - Andrea Rambaldi, Emergency sclerotherapy versus medical interventions for bleeding esophageal varices in cirrhotics - Gennaro D'Amico, Ribavirin with or without alpha interferon versus no intervention, placebo or alpha interferon for chronic hepatitis C - Lise Lotte Kjaergard, Nonabsorbable disaccharides for hepatic encephalopathy - Lise Lotte Kaergard) are undergoing the peer refereeing process, and three reviews (Antibiotics for preventing leptospirosis - Fabio Guidugli, Antibiotics for treating leptospirosis - Fabio Guidugli, and Ursodeoxycholic acid for primary biliary cirrhosis - Christian Gluud) and two protocols (Isosorbide-5-mononitrate for esophageal varices bleeding and rebleeding - Tianshu Liu, Chinese medical herbs for hepatitis B - Jianping Liu,) after having received comments of the peer referees are sent back to the authors for amendments. One accepted protocol (Branched-chain amino acids for hepatic encephalopathy - Christian Gluud) will be published in the next issue of The CL.

Handsearching

Most of the 24 registered journals are completely handsearched for all the years until present. We have to remark that this is achieved thanks to the contribution of only a limited number of handsearchers, and our wish is also to have more people involved in this activity. The journals not published in English language that our Group has registered for is very scarce, and efforts in finding more handsearchers should be made.

Experience shows that to handsearch a year with let us say 500 citable units does not take more than two days, but in reality it takes years for most.

In case handsearchers need our help in photocopying, entering citations manually or downloading citations from available electronic databases, they are very much welcome to contact us. These practical things should in no way obstruct the progress.

Present handsearchers wishing to retract from this activity may also do so by sending us a short note.

This will only benefit the actions need to be taken for the near future.

Below is the list of journals divided into groups according to the years being completed.

Journals searched from the initial period of registration until the end of 1998 (and the ensuing months until present):

- Baillières Clinical Gastroenterology (1987-ongoing)
- Chinese Journal of Clinical Hepatology (1985-ongoing)
- Chinese Journal of Hepatology (1993 - ongoing)
- Chinese Journal of Infectious Diseases (1983-ongoing)
- Chinese Journal of Integrated Traditional and Western Medicine on Liver Diseases (1991-ongoing)
- Gastroenterology Clinics of North America (1987-ongoing)
- GE. Journal Portugûes de Gastroenterologia (1984- ongoing)
- Hepatology (1981 - ongoing)
- Hepatology Supplements (1981 - ongoing)
- Journal of Hepatology (1985 - ongoing)
- Journal of Viral Hepatitis (1994 - ongoing)
- Liver (1981 - ongoing)

Journals with most of the years completed (>50%)

- European Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology (1995-1998)
- Gut (1960-ongoing)
- Clinics in Gastroenterology (1972-1986)
- Digestion (1968-ongoing)
- Digestive Diseases (1983-ongoing)
- Medicine et Chirurgie Digestive (1972-ongoing)
- Scandinavian Journal of Gastroenterology (1966-1984)

Journals lagging behind in the process. It may be that the handsearchers had not reported their results to the Editorial Team Office of the CHBG yet. In this case they are kindly urged to do so.

- Liver Transplantation and Surgery (1995-ongoing)
- Scandinavian Journal of Gastroenterology Supplements (1968 - ongoing)
- Endoscopy (1985 - ongoing)
- Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology (1986 -ongoing)
- Surgical Laparoscopy and Endoscopy (1991 -

ongoing)

Handsearching does benefit also other groups within the Collaboration. From the very start the CHBG has contributed in identifying 1,283 randomised clinical trials (RCT) and controlled clinical trials (CCT) relevant to the other groups. These were electronically submitted in a ProCite format to the New England Cochrane Center, but the hard copies of the entire article/abstract or only the first page are sent regularly to the Cochrane Colorectal Cancer Group, who after selection of the relevant publications send them further to the Upper Gastrointestinal and Pancreatic Diseases Group, which on its turn picks up the relevant and sends the rest further to the Inflammatory Bowel Disease Review Group. This chain process has proven to be very effective and time saving.

ProCite database

The CHBG database established in a ProCite format contains 14,272 electronic citations out of which 9,369 are with paper copies tagged as RCTs, CCTs, Meta-analyses (M-A), Second opinion ought to be sought (SOS), Consensus reports (CONS), Observational studies (OBS), Reviews (REV) and Miscellaneous (MISC). This collection of studies aims to help reviewers in their reviewing process, so the Group is expecting to fulfil requests from reviewers. The number of the RCTs as full text articles or in the form of abstracts is 4,879. So we have the 'starting material' for conducting systematic reviews on almost any hepato-biliary subject.

New registered titles

1. Albendazole and percutaneous needle aspiration for hydatid cyst - Siavosh-Nasser Moghaddam
2. Colchicine for alcoholic liver disease - Andrea Rambaldi (protocol submitted)
3. Milk thistle for liver disease - Bradly Jacobs
4. Propylthiouracil for alcoholic liver disease - Andrea Rambaldi
5. S-adenosyl-L-methionine for alcoholic liver disease - Andrea Rambaldi
6. Ursodeoxycholic acid with or without extracorporeal shock wave treatment for gallbladder stones - Lise Lotte Kjaergard

Recruitment

New members of the CHBG are recruited during the meetings the Group holds, i.e., the CHBG meeting in Naples in April during the EASL, or when members of the CHBG attend other meetings and there they make the aims and scope of the Group popular to the others. Enclosed in this newsletter is an invitation to participate form. Please if it is not a burden for you, make photocopies and distribute it among your colleagues.

The 1991 Pharmacy Foundation Fund

Thanks to the received additional funding of 1.2 million DKK from the 1991 Pharmacy Foundation Fund to be used until the end of 2000, the Group can proceed with its coordinating activities.

Getting Research into Practice (GRIP)

The Danish Medical Research Council has responded positively to the application of the CHBG in collaboration with health economics and organizational specialists from Copenhagen for grants on preparation of Cochrane systematic reviews. The announcement is published in this Newsletter, and if you are interested, you should contact the Editorial Team Office of the CHBG for obtaining the application form. The sooner, the better!

Contributions

Ninna Frydendall is still working free of charge for the Group. Her time is mostly fully engaged in typing and downloading citations from MedLine, Embase etc. Unfortunately Sheila Grenbom had to interrupt her work with the Group and she also retracted her authorship from the protocol 'Nonabsorbable disaccharides for hepatic encephalopathy' she had worked on. Though for a short time with us, we extend our gratitude to her.

We want to thank also here the peer referees Andrew Burroughs, Gennaro D'Amico, Robert De Franchis, Wolfgang Fleig, Jens Henrik Henriksen, Kim Krogsgaard, Jean Pierre Pignon, Renee Poupon, Thierry Poynard, and Robert Sutton for their valuable judgement in the form of critical comments to the protocols and systematic reviews they refereed in the past several months.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Past events

EASL-meeting Naples 8-12 April, 1999

The CHBG had a three-hour meeting in Naples, Italy on 11 April during the annual ESALD meeting. Luigi Pagliaro and Christian Gluud chaired the meeting. Thirty-two people were present. For the newcomers there was a general introduction about the involvement of the Cochrane Collaboration, its objectives and present structure, after which Christian Gluud elaborated the achievements of the Hepato-Biliary Group. The programme included also two presentations of Lise Lotte Kaergard on trial quality and intervention effects and quality of trials in hepato-biliary journals. Kim Krogsgaard reported his work on sequential combination of glucocorticosteroids and alfa interferon versus alfa interferon alone for chronic hepatitis B systematic review, whereas Gennaro D'Amico talked on TIPS for the prevention of rebleeding in patients with cirrhosis - a meta-analysis of randomised controlled studies. The final discussions were animated which engendered a variety of difficult, but pertinent questions.

During the EASL-meeting the CHBG has been also represented with posters. Information materials on the Cochrane Collaboration and the forthcoming VII

Annual Cochrane Colloquium in Rome were distributed.

Future Events

VII Annual Cochrane Colloquium is approaching. It will take place at Università S. Tommaso D'Aquino Largo Angelicum, 1 - Roma (Italy) from October 5 to 9, 1999. If you want to find more about it, visit <http://www.areas.it/roma99>

AASLD Meeting 1999 and CHBG's meeting, Monday evening, 8th of November:

The AASLD meeting will take place in November 5-9, at Wyndham Anatole Hotel, Dallas, TX. If you still want to register, you may register online at the following address:

Register Online@www.aasld.org

The preregistration deadline is 8 October.

If you want to receive detailed information, send an email to AASLD@aasld.org
fax: 703-299-9622

The CHBG's meeting will be from 18.30-21.00 on Monday, 8th of November. It is open to all and the programme is also printed in this newsletter. If you intend to come and have a possibility, please send us a fax or email so that we know you will be coming. This will help us to organize it better.

CHBG-meeting in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2000 on 29th of April from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Programme for this meeting is not available yet.

CHBG-one-day symposium in Prague, on Tuesday, April 17th, 2001 from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

The Scientific Committee of the EASL has approved and ratified a one-day CHBG symposium on evidence-based medicine in Prague 2001. The preliminary programme is almost ready and the speakers who confirmed their participation are Andrew Burroughs, Gennaro D'Amico, Christian Gluud, Torben Jørgensen, Lise Lotte Kjaergard, Luigi Pagliaro, Thierry Poynard, William Rosenberg and Ulrich Tröhler. We all are certainly delighted with their consent to participate and we would like to render our thanks once again.

COMPUTING NEWS

You may download the RevMan 4.0.3 software from the internet addresses below or contact CHBG editorial office for a copy of the software on CD-ROM.

<ftp://ftp.cochrane.co.uk/pub/revman/revman40.exe>

<ftp://cochrane:archie@hiru.mcmaster>

<ftp://cochrane:australia@healthinfo>

[fmc.flinders.edu.au/cochrane/revman](ftp://fmc.flinders.edu.au/cochrane/revman)
ca/internet/ftp/cochrane/revman

You are welcome to get any assistance regarding

installation and downloading of the software from the CHBG's information technology coordinator, Nader Salassahri (nader.s@ipm.hosp.dk, Tel: +45 3338 3747).

TO THE REVIEWERS - A KIND REQUEST

Please note, that there is not much time left until the next submission of the CHBG's Module for publication in The CL. (October 27 is the deadline for the

Editorial Team Office!). A copy of the protocol/ review, already published in The CL and converted into RevMan 4.0.3, was sent to you during August and September with a request to import it in the new version of the RevMan software, check it for mistakes, fill out the missing information (mainly contact details), and send it back. If you have finished doing this, please send it back so that the continuous publication of your protocol/ review in the new format is ensured.



7th COCHRANE HEPATO-BILIARY GROUP MEETING

Dallas, Texas

Monday, 8 November 1999

6.30 P.M. to 9.00 P.M.

The meeting room is Obelisk A

PROGRAMME

Chairs: Ronald L. Koretz and Christian Gluud

6.30 p.m. to 6.35 p.m.	Welcome and presentation of the programme	Ronald L. Koretz
6.35 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.	Past, present and future of the CHBG	Ronald L. Koretz
7.00 p.m. to 7.15 p.m.	Interferon for acute hepatitis C	Thierry Poynard
7.15 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Interferon for chronic hepatitis C	Thierry Poynard
7.30 p.m. to 7.50 p.m.	Shunts for variceal haemorrhage	Robert Sutton
7.50 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.	Trial quality and intervention efficacy	Christian Gluud
8.10 p.m. to 8.25 p.m.	Update on the CHBG protocols and systematic reviews on The Cochrane Library	Christian Gluud
8.25 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.	Discussions, any other business and closing the meeting	

Researchers, wishing to assist the Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group in doing handsearches and systematic reviews, are invited to contact: The Editorial Team Office, The Copenhagen Trial Unit, Institute of Preventive Medicine, Copenhagen University Hospital, DK-1399 Copenhagen, Denmark, Tel: +45 3338 3742, or +45 33383743; Fax + 45 3332 4410; Email CHBG@ipm.hosp.dk, or obtain more information on the Cochrane Collaboration and the CHBG by visiting the following Internet home pages: <http://www.cochrane.co.uk>; <http://hiru.mcmaster.ca/cochrane> and <http://inet.uni2.dk/~ctucph/chbg>.