



2010 Impact Factor Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews impact factor (IF) for 2010? 6.186

What is an impact factor?

The impact factor is a tool for ranking, evaluating, and comparing journals. It is a measure of the frequency with which the “average article” in a journal has been cited in a particular year.

How is the impact factor calculated?

The impact factor is calculated by dividing the number of IF year citations to the source items published in that journal during the previous two years. So for the 2010 IF:

Cites in 2010 to reviews published in:	2008 = 3709	Number of reviews published in:	2008 = 526
	2009 = 3269		2009 = 602

Cochrane IF Calculation 2010:

$$\frac{\text{Cites in 2010 to reviews published in 2008–2009}}{\text{Number of reviews published in 2008–2009}} = \frac{6978}{1128} = 6.186$$

What is included in the source items for the denominator? Are protocols included?

All new and substantively updated (new citation version) reviews that appeared in CDSR during 2008 and 2009 are included in the source items for the 2010 IF calculation. Protocols are not included.

How does performance in 2010 compare with performance in 2009?

Subject : Medicine, General & Internal	2009	2010	% change
Impact factor for CDSR	5.653	6.186	9.4
Median impact factor for subject	1.275	1.125	-11.7
Aggregate impact factor for subject*	4.099	3.985	-2.7
Ranking**	11 th	10 th	-
Cited half-life for CDSR***	4.1	4.4	7.3
Cited half-life for subject***	7.5	7.6	1.3
Immediacy index for CDSR****	1.311	0.953	-27.3
Immediacy index for subject****	1.169	0.990	-15.3

*The aggregate impact factor for a subject category is calculated the same way as the impact factor for a journal, but it takes into account the number of citations to all journals in the category and the number of source-articles from all journals in the category.

**The number of journals included in Medicine, General & Internal in 2009 was 133, and in 2010, 151 journals were included in this category.

***The cited half-life is the median age of the papers that were cited in the current year, e.g. a cited half-life of 4.4 years means the citations made to CDSR in 2010, half were to papers over 4 years old.

****The immediacy index is the average number of times the source-article is cited in the year it is published and indicates how quickly articles in a journal are cited.

What were the top cited reviews in 2010?

Title	Times cited in 2010
Interventions for preventing falls in older people living in the community	81
Interventions for enhancing medication adherence	77
Nicotine replacement therapy for smoking cessation	77
Interventions for treating obesity in children	49
Physical activity and enhanced fitness to improve cognitive function in older people without known cognitive impairment	40
Publication bias in clinical trials due to statistical significance or direction of trial results	39
Antioxidant supplements for prevention of mortality in healthy participants and patients with various diseases	36
Vaccines for preventing pneumococcal infection in adults	35
Decision aids for people facing health treatment or screening decisions	34
Exercise for the management of cancer-related fatigue in adults	34

Can authors track citations to their reviews?

Authors can use the ISI Web of Science (www.isiknowledge.com/; subscription required). However, please note that ISI have difficulty matching a certain percentage of citations to the original authors' Cochrane Review. Therefore, authors viewing their citations in ISI need to be aware that the number of citations shown in ISI may not be a *true* representation of *all* citations for an individual review – in most cases this is likely to be an underestimate of the total number of citations. Members of the Wiley–Blackwell team are currently working with ISI to identify these cases and, where sufficient information exists, to allocate these citations back to the original reviews. Please encourage citing authors to reference Cochrane Reviews correctly using the “this record should be cited as” guidance in the header of each review article.

What is self-citation?

Self-citation (when, for example, one Cochrane Review cites another Cochrane Review) can have an effect on the impact factor. 454 of the 6978 citations used in the 2010 Impact Factor calculations were self cites. This represents 6% of the total citations for 2010.

	2009	2010
Total cites	23102	27366
Cites to years used in impact factor calculation	6574	6978
Impact factor	5.653	6.186
Self-cites	1461 (6% of 23102)	2030 (7% of 27366)
Self-cites to years used in impact factor calculation	404 (6% of 6574)	454 (6% of 6978)
Impact factor without self-cites	5.305	5.784

What is the benefit of having an impact factor?

Authors are often asked to list their publications and associated impact factor when applying for grants, or for evaluation as part of the research assessment exercise (or similar). However, it is clear that Cochrane Reviews have a much wider impact than can be measured by citations alone. Other examples of impact include informing guideline development, policy setting, consumer communication and many others in order to inform and improve healthcare decision-making.

Where can I find out more information?

Wiley–Blackwell will be hosting web-based training and telephone sessions (webinar) specifically for the Cochrane Collaboration to provide an overview of the bibliometric data available for the *Cochrane Database of Systematic*

Reviews in 2010 and to answer any queries you might have regarding the calculation and interpretation of the impact factor and associated metrics. The webinars will take place in July and September.

To register your interest: Please email gstewart@wiley.com and include any questions or areas of interest.