

# Withdrawing published Cochrane Reviews

[Version history](#)

## Cochrane Reviews

Cochrane Reviews should only be withdrawn under exceptional circumstances (i.e. for reasons other than those that can be described using the [Updating Classification System](#)), for example, if there is a concern about the conduct or reporting of the Cochrane Review:

Examples of reasons for withdrawing a Cochrane Review

- **Serious error in a Cochrane Review.** Following the conclusions of the published review could result in harm to patients or populations of interest (other than known adverse effects); and/or there are factual errors in describing one or more included studies that risk misinforming implementation or investment decisions about an intervention; and/or the reported treatment effect is inconsistent with the real effect shown in the reported data. *Also see [Serious errors in published Cochrane Reviews](#).*
- **Confirmed serious error in a Cochrane Review as a direct result of the retraction of an included study.** This could occur if studies included in a Cochrane Review are retracted from publication, and an analysis shows that the removal of the retracted studies from the analyses in the Cochrane Review could lead to a serious error (defined above). *Also see [Serious errors in published Cochrane Reviews](#).*
- **Scientific misconduct in the Cochrane Review.** This could refer to fraud or other scientific misconduct in the preparation of the review.
- **Serious breach of Cochrane's conflict of interest policy.** A ruling by Cochrane's Funding Arbiters that a Cochrane Review has seriously breached Cochrane's [conflict of interest policy](#).

Withdrawing a Cochrane Review generates a [new citation version](#). For Cochrane Reviews, this includes a new entry in PubMed.

## Protocols for Cochrane Reviews

Protocols may be withdrawn for the same reasons as for reviews (see above) or for one of the following reasons:

- The protocol is out of date and does not meet the current methodological standards of Cochrane.
- Authors have made no progress with this protocol in XX months/years. New authors are being sought to take over this protocol.
- The protocol has been split into or merged with other protocols (provide full references).

Protocols that have not been converted into full Cochrane Reviews within two years of publication should generally be withdrawn from the *CDSR*.

Withdrawing a protocol for a Cochrane Review generates a [new citation version](#).

Up to 16 December 2014, withdrawn protocols were removed from the *CDSR* after one issue of publication. From this date onwards, withdrawn protocols remain published to maintain the public record of publication and to complement the inclusion in [PROSPERO](#).

## Withdrawal followed by republication

The Editors may accept for publication a revised version of a Cochrane Review that addresses the issues raised in the withdrawn notice. Any such version will be re-evaluated using standard Cochrane editorial process, and may then be approved for publication (as a separate, subsequent version) in consultation with the [Network Senior Editor](#).