

QUOROM Guidelines for Meta-Analyses and Systematic Reviews of RCTs*

Title	Identify the study as a meta-analysis (or systematic review) of RCTs
Abstract	Use the journal's structured format
Introduction	Present <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The clinical problem• The biological rationale for the intervention• The rationale for the review• An explicit statement of objectives which includes the study population, the condition of interest, the exposure or intervention, and the outcome(s) considered
Sources	Describe <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information sources in detail (eg databases, registers, personal files, experts, agencies, hand-searching)• Any restriction (years considered, publication status, language of publication)
Study Selection	Describe <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusion and exclusion criteria (defining population, intervention, main outcomes, and study design)• How clinical heterogeneity was assessed• Methods used for validity assessment• The criteria and process used for validity assessment (eg, masked conditions, quality assessment)• The data abstraction process (eg, completed independently, in duplicate)• Study characteristics and how clinical heterogeneity was assessed• The principal measures of effect (eg, relative risk)• Method of combining results (statistical testing and confidence intervals)• Handling of missing data• How statistical heterogeneity was assessed• Rationale for any a-priori sensitivity and subgroup analyses
Results	Present <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A meta-analysis profile summarizing trial flow• Descriptive data for each trial (study design, participant characteristics, sample size, details of intervention, outcome definitions, length of follow-up)• Agreement on the selection and validity assessment• Simple summary results (for each treatment group in each trial, for each primary outcome)• Data needed to calculate effect sizes and confidence intervals in intention-to-treat analyses
Discussion	Discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key findings• Clinical inferences based on internal and external validity• The results in light of the totality of available evidence• Strengths and weaknesses• Potential biases in the review process (eg, publication bias)• Future research agenda

*Modified from Moher D, Cook DJ, Eastwood S, Olkin I, Rennie D, Stroup DF. Improving the quality of reports of meta-analyses of randomised controlled trials: the QUOROM statement. Quality of Reporting of Meta-analyses. Lancet 1999;354:1896-900.