Systematic reviews: the QUOROM statement

Instruction for authors submitting systematic reviews of randomised controlled trials:[1]

- You must use the headings, subheadings and guidance of the checklist in Table 1 to structure your manuscript.
- Please also submit a copy of the completed checklist with your manuscript, indicating whether each item was reported and the page number where it can be located.
- Your manuscript must include a chart showing the flow of studies through the review as illustrated in Figure 1.

1 Moher D, Cook DJ, Eastwood S, Olkin I, Rennie D, Stroup D F. Improving the quality of reports of meta-analyses of randomised controlled trials: the QUOROM statement. Quality of Reporting of Meta-analyses. *Lancet* 1999; **354:** 1896-1900.

Table 1 Quality of reporting of systematic reviews (meta-analyses)

Heading	Subheading	Descriptor	Reported? (Y/N)	Page number
Title		Identify the report as a systematic review (meta-analysis) of RCTs		
Abstract		Use a structured format		
		Describe		
	Objectives	The clinical question explicitly		
	Data sources	The databases (ie list) and other information sources		
	Review methods	The selection criteria (ie population, intervention, outcome and study design); methods for validity assessment, data abstraction, and study characteristics, and quantitative data synthesis in sufficient detail to permit replication		
	Results	Characteristics of the RCTs included and excluded; qualitative and quantitative findings (ie point estimates and confidence intervals); and subgroup analyses		
	Conclusion	The main results		
		Describe		
Introduction		The explicit clinical problem, biological rationale for the intervention, and rationale for review		
Methods	Searching	The information sources, in detail (eg databases, registers, personal files, expert informants, agencies, hand-searching) and any restrictions (years considered, publication status, language publication)		
	Selection	The inclusion and exclusion criteria (defining population, intervention, principal outcomes, and study design)		
	Validity assessment	The criteria and process used (eg masked conditions, quality assessment, and their findings)		
	Data abstraction	The process or processes used (eg completed independently, in duplicate)		
	Study characteristics	The type of study design, participants' characteristics, details of intervention, outcome definition, &tc, and how clinical heterogeneity was assessed		
	Quantitative data synthesis	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; a rationale for any a-priori sensitivity and subgroup analyses; and any assessment of publication bias		
Results	Trial flow	Provide a systematic review profile summarising trial flow (see Fig. 1)		
	Study characteristics	Present descriptive data for each trial (eg age, sample size, intervention, dose, duration, follow-up period)		
	Quantitative data synthesis	Report agreement on the selection and validity assessment; present simple summary results (for each treatment group in each trial, for each primary outcome; present data needed to calculate effect sizes and confidence intervals in intention-to-treat analyses (eg 2x2 tables of counts, means and SDs, proportions)		
Discussion		Summarise key findings; discusses clinical inferences based on internal and external validity; interpret the results in light of the totality of available evidence; describe potential biases in the review process (eg population bias); and suggest a future research agenda		

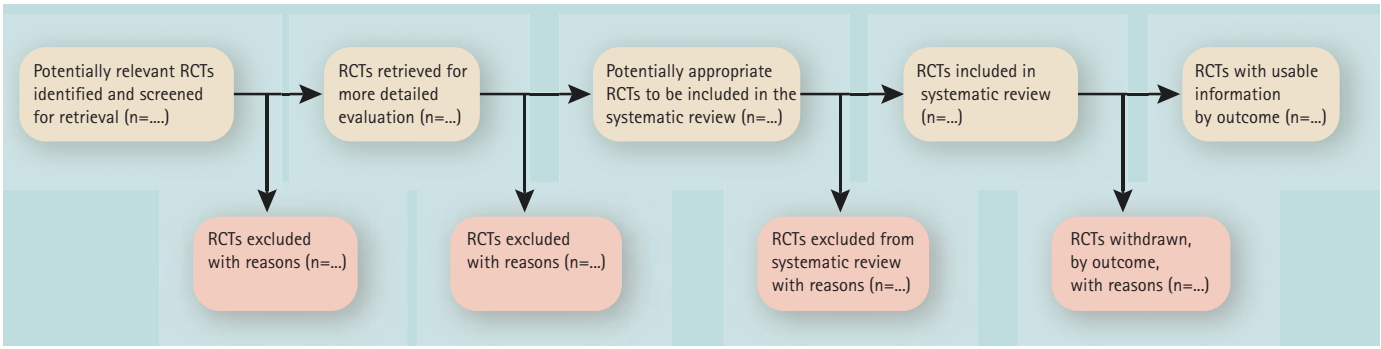

Fig. 1 Progress through the stages of a systematic review of RCTs