

Quality of reporting of meta-analyses*				
Heading	Subheading	Descriptor	Reported? (Y/N)	Page number
<b>Title</b>		Identify the report as a meta-analysis [or systematic review] of RCTs		
<b>Abstract</b>		Use a structured format		
	Objectives	<b>Describe:</b> Clinical question explicitly		
	Data sources	Databases (i.e., list) and other information sources		
	Study selection	Selection criteria (i.e., population, intervention, outcome, and study design); methods for validity assessment		
	Data extraction	Methods for quantitative data synthesis in sufficient detail to permit replication, and methods for data abstraction and definition of study characteristics		
	Data synthesis	Characteristics of the RCTs included and excluded; qualitative and quantitative findings (i.e., point estimates and confidence intervals); and subgroup analyses		
	Conclusions	Main results		
<b>Introduction</b>		Describe explicit clinical problem, biological rationale for the intervention, and rationale for review		
<b>Results</b>	Trial flow	Provide a meta-analysis profile summarizing trial flow		
	Study characteristics	Present descriptive data for each trial (e.g., age, sample size, intervention, dose, duration, follow-up period)		
	Quantitative data synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report agreement on the selection and validity assessment</li> <li>• Present simple summary results (for each treatment group in each trial, for each primary outcome)</li> <li>• Present data needed to calculate effect sizes and confidence intervals in intention-to-treat analyses (e.g., 2x2 tables of counts, means and SDs, proportions)</li> </ul>		
<b>Discussion</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarize key findings</li> <li>• Discuss clinical inferences based on internal and external validity</li> <li>• Interpret the results in light of the totality of available evidence</li> <li>• Describe potential biases in the review process (e.g., publication bias)</li> <li>• Suggest a future research agenda</li> </ul>		

\* Adapted from The Lancet, 1999. 354:1897