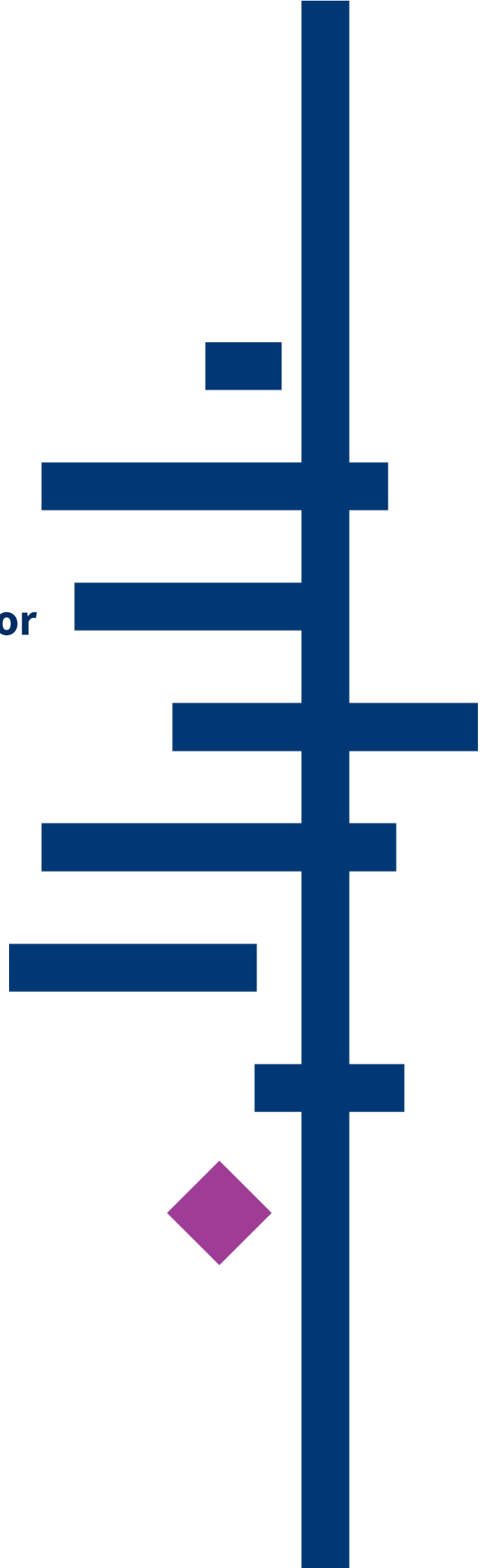




Cochrane
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**Cochrane Database of
Systematic Reviews**
2020 Journal Impact Factor
Frequently Asked Questions



Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.

What is the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) Journal Impact Factor for 2020?

The Journal Impact Factor for 2020 is **9.266**

What is the Journal Impact Factor?

The Journal Impact Factor is published in the Journal Citation Reports® on an annual basis by Clarivate Analytics. It is a tool for ranking, evaluating, and comparing journals and a measure of the frequency with which the ‘average article’ in a journal has been cited in a particular year.

How is the Journal Impact Factor calculated?

The Journal Impact Factor is calculated by dividing the number of Journal Impact Factor year citations to the source items published in that journal (or database!) during the previous two years. The 2020 Journal Impact Factor is calculated as follows:

Cites in 2020 to reviews published in:	2019 = 4,249 2018 = 7,055	Number of reviews published in:	2019 = 575 2018 = 645
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CDSR Journal Impact Factor calculation 2020:

$$\frac{\text{Cites in 2020 to reviews published in 2018-2019}}{\text{Number of reviews published in 2018-2019}} = \frac{11,304}{1,220} = \mathbf{9.266}$$

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 the CDSR during 2018 and 2019 are included in the source items for the Journal Impact Factor calculation. Protocols are not included.

How does performance in 2020 compare with performance in 2019?

Subject category: Medicine, General & Internal	2019	2020	% Change
Journal Impact Factor for CDSR	7.890	9.266	17%
5-Year Journal Impact Factor	7.974	9.871	24%
Median Journal Impact Factor for subject	1.681	2.375	41%
Aggregate Journal Impact Factor for subject	4.391	5.181	18%
Ranking**	10th	11th	+1
Cited half-life for CDSR***	6.1	6.3	3%
Cited half-life for subject category***	7.9	6.9	-13%
Immediacy index for CDSR****	1.077	2.276	111%
Immediacy index for subject category****	0.989	5.351	441%

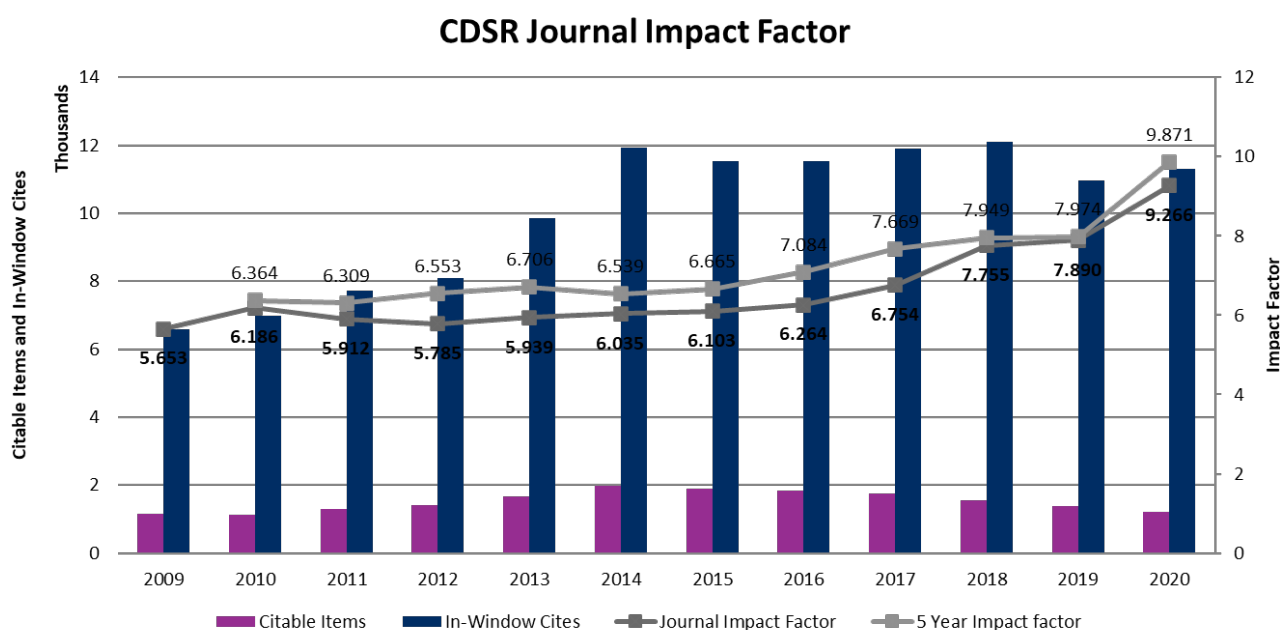
* The aggregate Journal Impact Factor for a subject category is calculated the same way as the Journal Impact Factor for a journal, but it considers the number of citations to all journals in the category and the number of source-articles from all journals in the category.

** The number of journals included in the Medicine, General & Internal category in 2020 was 169.

*** 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 6.3 years means the citations made to CDSR in 2020, half were to papers over 6 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.

How does the 2020 Journal Impact Factor compare to previous years?



Can authors track citations to their Cochrane Reviews?

Authors can use the online subscription-based citation indexing service Web of Science (<https://clarivate.com/products/web-of-science/>) to track citations to their Cochrane Reviews. The Web of Science currently covers over 34,000 journals so authors viewing their citations in Web of Science should be aware that the number of citations shown may be an underestimate of the total number of citations for their Cochrane Review. The Web of Science evaluates and selects journals based primarily on citation impact. This process is underpinned by the principle of Bradford’s Law; that a relatively small number of journals publish the majority of significant scholarly results. Authors may see higher citation counts for their Cochrane Reviews in other indexing services such as Scopus and Google Scholar.

What is self-citation?

Self-citation, when one Cochrane Review cites another Cochrane Review, can influence the Journal Impact Factor. 414 of the 11,304 citations used in the 2020 Journal Impact Factor calculation were self cites. This represents 3.7% of the total citations for 2020.

	2019	2020
Total cites	67,763	81,212
Cites to years in Journal Impact Factor calculation	10,975	11,304
Journal Impact Factor	7.890	9.266
Self-cites	2,821 (4.2% of 67,763)	2,601 (3.2% of 81,212)
Self-cites to years in Journal Impact Factor calculation	571 (5.2% of 10,975)	414 (3.7% of 11,304)
Journal Impact Factor without self-cites	7.480	8.926

What is the benefit of having a Journal Impact Factor?

Authors are often asked to list their publications and associated Journal Impact Factor when applying for grants or for evaluation as part of the research assessment exercise (or similar). However, 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 to inform and improve healthcare decision-making.

Where can I find more information?

Please email [Georgie Smith](#) with any queries you might have regarding the calculation and interpretation of the Journal Impact Factor and associated metrics.