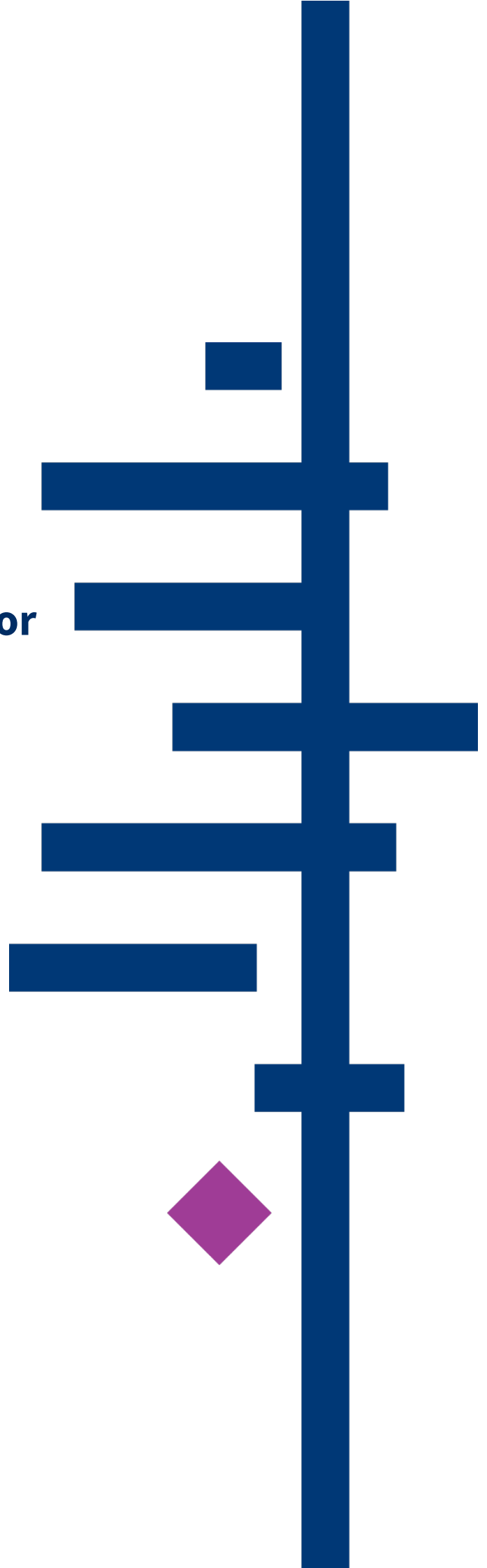




Cochrane
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**Cochrane Database of
Systematic Reviews**
2021 Journal Impact Factor
Frequently Asked Questions



Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.

What is the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) Journal Impact Factor for 2021?

The Journal Impact Factor for 2021 is **12.008**

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 2021 Journal Impact Factor is calculated as follows:

Cites in 2021 to reviews published in:	2020 = 5,343 2019 = 8,214	Number of reviews published in:	2020 = 556 2019 = 573
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CDSR Journal Impact Factor calculation 2021:

$$\frac{\text{Cites in 2021 to reviews published in 2019-2020}}{\text{Number of reviews published in 2019-2020}} = \frac{13,557}{1,129} = \mathbf{12.008}$$

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 2019 and 2020 are included in the source items for the Journal Impact Factor calculation. Protocols are not included.

How does performance in 2021 compare with performance in 2020?

Subject category: Medicine, General & Internal	2020	2021	% Change
Journal Impact Factor for CDSR	9.289	12.008	23%
5-Year Journal Impact Factor	9.871	11.956	17%
Median Journal Impact Factor for subject	2.375	2.981	20%
Aggregate Journal Impact Factor for subject*	5.181	8.280	37%
Ranking**	11th	19th	-8
Cited half-life for CDSR***	6.3	6.7	6%
Cited half-life for subject category***	6.9	6.3	-10%
Immediacy index for CDSR****	2.276	1.319	-73%
Immediacy index for subject category****	5.351	1.887	-184%

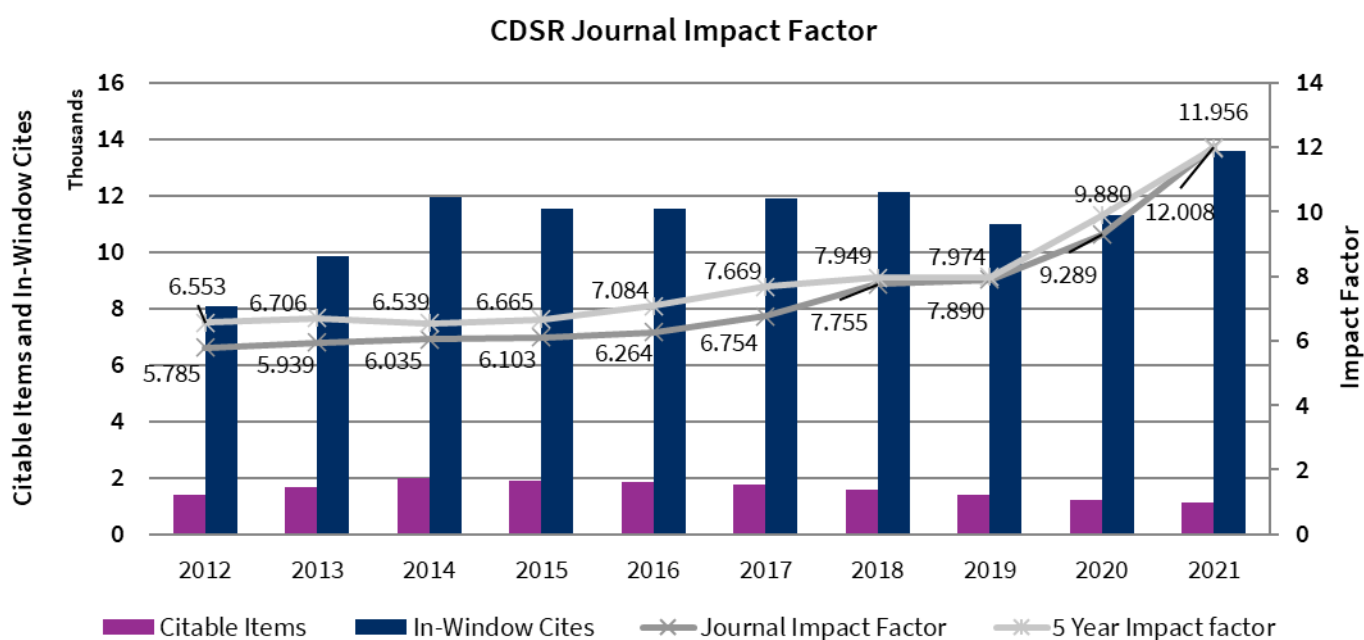
* The aggregate Journal Impact Factor for a subject category is calculated the same way as the Journal Impact Factor for a journal, but it considers the number of citations to all journals in the category and the number of source-articles from all journals in the category.

** The number of journals included in the Medicine, General & Internal category in 2021 was 172.

*** 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 6.7 years means that of the citations made to CDSR in 2021, 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 2021 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 35,000 publications 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. 482 of the 13,557 (3.6%) citations used in the 2021 Journal Impact Factor calculation were self cites.

	2020	2021
Total cites	81,212	92,845
Cites to years in Journal Impact Factor calculation	11,304	13,557
Journal Impact Factor	9.266	12.008
Self-cites	2,601 (3.2% of 81,212)	2,545 (2.7% of 92,845)
Self-cites to years in Journal Impact Factor calculation	414 (3.7% of 11,304)	482 (3.6% of 13,557)
Journal Impact Factor without self-cites	8.926	11.581

What is the benefit of having a Journal Impact Factor?

The Journal Impact Factor is a measure of citation frequency over a short, specified time-period. 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. More information on Impact metrics will be available in due course in the annual Impact Report.

Where can I find more information?

Please email [Cathryn Fowler](mailto:Cathryn.Fowler@cochrane.org) with any queries you might have regarding the calculation and interpretation of the Journal Impact Factor and associated metrics.