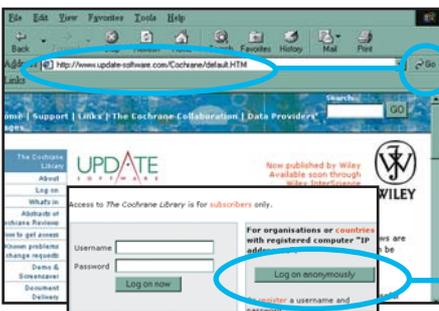


# Undertaking a literature search

(With the patient present)

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Mr W B, a 67 year old company director, limped into my room complaining of an inflamed, painful and swollen right big toe – classic gout. He had an important meeting in two days time that he could not afford to miss. He demanded something to control the symptoms and enable him to attend the meeting. I knew that colchicine given in acute gout gives good relief, but is associated with diarrhoea. However, the previous day one of my colleagues had discussed a clinical meeting he had recently attended where one of the speakers doubted the efficacy of colchicine in acute gout. I decided to do a quick literature search, while the patient was sitting in front of me, to find out if indeed colchicine is no better than placebo in acute gout.



## Step 1 – Electronic search

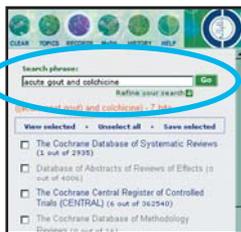
1. I opened my browser and typed **http://www.update-software.com/clibng/cliblogon.htm**

2. Clicked on **GO**

The Cochrane Library home page was displayed

3. Clicked on **log on anonymously**

(Access to The Cochrane Library is free in Australia and you do not need a username or password)



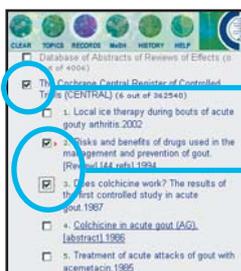
4. Search phrase window opened up.

In the window I typed 'acute gout and colchicine'

5. Clicked on **GO**

My query resulted in seven hits

The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews and The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials was highlighted



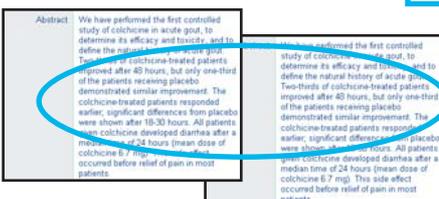
6. Since I was interested in the results of clinical trials I clicked in the box: **Cochrane Register of Controlled Trials**

My search narrowed to six articles

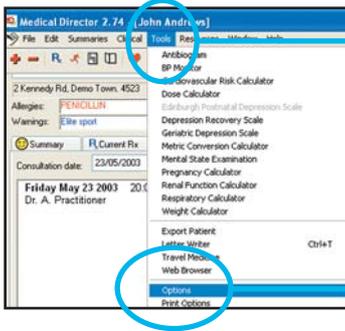
7. Two articles were specific to my information needs. I double clicked on **'Does colchicine work? The result of the first controlled study in acute gout'**

The article concluded that two-thirds of patients improved after 48 hours, thus showing significant benefit as compared to the placebo (one-third improved)

8. I double clicked on the article: **'Risks and benefits of drugs used in the management and prevention of gout'** this gives the results of a more recent study



These studies were quite old but they had good face validity and, taken together, they gave me more confidence to prescribe colchicine for Mr W B's acute gout, diarrhoea notwithstanding

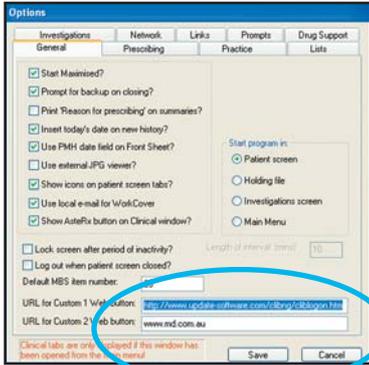


**Step 2 – Easy access**

To set up a direct custom web connection to The Cochrane Library through your medical records software, follow these steps. (For illustration purposes Medical Director is shown). For other software customise the web link button to connect to The Cochrane Library

1. In the patient screen click on **TOOLS**

2. Click on **OPTIONS** in the drop down list

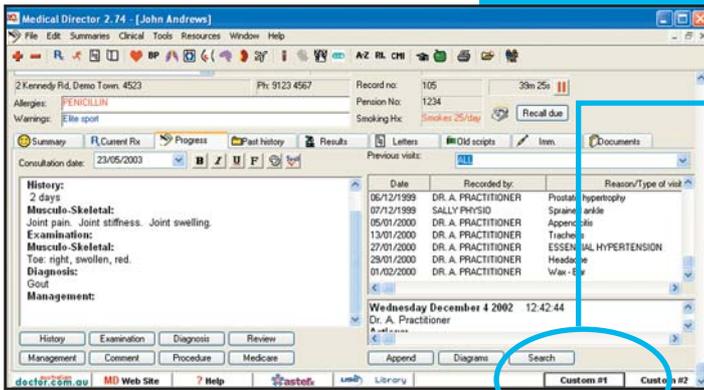


3. Options screen opens. Select **General** tab and go to the box **URL for Custom 1 web button**

4. Type the URL address: **http://www.update-software.com/clubng/clubngon.htm**

5. Click on **SAVE**

The URL address has been saved as **Custom 1 web button**



6. Next time you want to access The Cochrane Library at the time of consultation click on **Custom 1** button and you will automatically be connected to The Cochrane Library website

Conflict of interest: none declared.