

Rapid Review

A **rapid review** is a form of [systematic review](#) that uses **streamlined methods** to produce evidence **quickly and efficiently**, often for **time-sensitive decision-making** in healthcare or policy.

Rapid reviews balance **speed** and **rigor**, trading some methodological depth for timely results.

Key Characteristics

- **Shorter timelines** (weeks to a few months)
- May restrict:
 1. Number of databases searched
 2. Language or publication date
 3. Study types included
- Often skips dual screening or full quality appraisal
- Transparent about methodological limitations

When to Use

- Public health emergencies (e.g., COVID-19)
- Clinical guidelines needing quick updates
- Health technology assessments (HTA)
- Policy or regulatory decisions

Limitations

- Higher risk of [bias](#) due to abbreviated methods
- May miss relevant studies or nuances
- Less reproducible than full systematic reviews

Comparison with Other Reviews

| Type | Timeline | Rigor | Use Case |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Systematic Review | Months to >1 year | Very High | Definitive evidence synthesis |
| Rapid Review | 1-3 months | Moderate | Urgent decision-making |
| Scoping Review | Variable | Moderate | Exploratory mapping |
| Narrative Review | Flexible | Low to moderate | Broad expert-based overview |

Related Concepts

- [Systematic review protocol](#)
- [Bias assessment tools](#)
- [Levels of evidence](#)

rapid_review systematic_review evidence_based_medicine hta decision_support

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