

# VAPOUR Trial

The Cochrane [vertebroplasty](#) review of April 2018 was replaced with an updated version in November 2018 to address complaints of errors in analysis. The updated version continues to misrepresent the [evidence](#) supporting early intervention with [vertebroplasty](#) for patients with uncontrolled, severe pain and fracture duration <6 weeks. The VAPOUR trial is the only blinded trial of [vertebroplasty](#) restricted to this patient group. It showed the benefit of vertebroplasty over placebo, particularly when the intervention occurred within 3 weeks of [fracture](#). The Cochrane vertebroplasty review has ignored the positive outcomes in the VAPOUR trial. Open randomised trials of fractures <6-week duration support the positive findings of the VAPOUR trial. This is not described in the Cochrane review. The VAPOUR trial is clinically heterogeneous from other blinded trials. Cochrane protocol stipulates that clinically heterogeneous trials be described separately, as independent evidence, and not combined in analysis with dissimilar trials. Failure to observe this represents a serious protocol breach in the Cochrane review <sup>1)</sup>.

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De Leacy R. New, High-Quality Evidence for Vertebroplasty in the Management of Painful Recent Compression Fractures: Review of the [VAPOUR Trial](#). World Neurosurg. 2016 Dec;96:596-598. doi: 10.1016/j.wneu.2016.09.043. Epub 2016 Sep 16. PubMed PMID: 27647033.

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Vertebroplasty is superior to placebo intervention for pain reduction in patients with acute osteoporotic spinal fractures of less than 6 weeks' in duration. These findings will allow patients with acute painful fractures to have an additional means of pain management that is known to be effective <sup>2)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>  
Clark W, Bird P, Diamond T, Gonski P, Gebiski V. Cochrane vertebroplasty review misrepresented evidence for vertebroplasty with early intervention in severely affected patients. BMJ Evid Based Med. 2019 Mar 9. pii: bmjebm-2019-111171. doi: 10.1136/bmjebm-2019-111171. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 30852489.

<sup>2)</sup>  
Clark W, Bird P, Gonski P, Diamond TH, Smerdely P, McNeil HP, Schlaphoff G, Bryant C, Barnes E, Gebiski V. Safety and efficacy of vertebroplasty for acute painful osteoporotic fractures (VAPOUR): a multicentre, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. Lancet. 2016 Oct 1;388(10052):1408-1416. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31341-1. Epub 2016 Aug 17. Erratum in: Lancet. 2017 Feb 11;389(10069):602. PubMed PMID: 27544377.

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