Notes about learning and teaching about **Systematic Review and Meta-analysis**:

1. This is a CORE subject area, so we suggest that you make sure to spend some time reading and becoming comfortable with issues pertaining to articles that are in the format of a Systematic Review or Meta-analysis.

2. Terms pertaining to the Systematic Review and Meta-analysis.

   Systematic Reviews / Meta-analyses are different from all of the other CORE subject areas because they are examples of methods that are *summaries* of original, individual trials, rather than the individual trials themselves. The subjects of a systematic review can be thought of as the papers that are brought together to answer the question. Thus, the methods for a systematic review or meta-analysis will talk a lot about the *papers* that were collected for the study (in a way similar to the way that individual trials will talk about the *patients* that were collected for the study!)

   Because the method that defines a systematic review or meta-analysis has to do with the way that information is collected and summarized, rather than anything about the content of the information itself, these summaries can be on many different kinds of clinical questions. Thus, in our example packets, we have an example of a review for a question of therapy and a second example for a question of diagnosis.

   In order to get comfortable with these methods and the vocabulary that goes with them, we would like you to **look for the following terms in your reading:**

   - Systematic Review vs. Meta-analysis (what is the difference?)
   - Summary Statistic
   - Heterogeneity / Homogeneity
   - Point estimate
   - Confidence Intervals