




## 5 Summary of findings table

**Source:** McGoldrick E, Stewart F, Parker R, Dalziel SR. Antenatal corticosteroids for accelerating fetal lung maturation for women at risk of preterm birth. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev.* 2020;12:CD004454.

| Certainty assessment  |                   |              |               |              |                           |                      | No of patients  |                         | Effect                           |   | Certainty        | Importance |
|---|-------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---|------------------|------------|
| No of studies   | Study design      | Risk of bias | Inconsistency | Indirectness | Imprecision               | Other considerations | Corticosteroids | Placebo or no treatment | Relative (95% CI)                | Absolute (95% CI)                                       |                  |            |
| <b>Perinatal deaths – In babies born from singleton pregnancies</b> |                   |              |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 7   | randomized trials | not serious  | not serious   | not serious  | not serious               | none                 | 185/2756 (6.7%) | 225/2736 (8.2%)         | <b>RR 0.83</b><br>(0.70 to 0.99) | <b>14 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 25 fewer to 1 fewer)  | ⊕⊕⊕⊕<br>HIGH     | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Perinatal deaths – In babies born from multiple pregnancies</b>  |                   |              |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 2   | randomized trials | not serious  | not serious   | not serious  | very serious <sup>a</sup> | none                 | 19/131 (14.5%)  | 24/121 (19.8%)          | <b>RR 0.71</b><br>(0.41 to 1.22) | <b>58 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 117 fewer to 44 more) | ⊕⊕○○<br>LOW      | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Fetal death – In babies born from singleton pregnancies</b>      |                   |              |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 7   | randomized trials | not serious  | not serious   | not serious  | serious <sup>b</sup>      | none                 | 68/2756 (2.5%)  | 66/2736 (2.4%)          | <b>RR 1.06</b><br>(0.76 to 1.46) | <b>1 more per 1000</b><br>(from 6 fewer to 11 more)     | ⊕⊕⊕○<br>MODERATE | CRITICAL   |

| Certainty assessment   |                   |                      |               |              |                           |                      | No of patients  |                         | Effect                           |   | Certainty        | Importance |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---|------------------|------------|
| No of studies  | Study design      | Risk of bias         | Inconsistency | Indirectness | Imprecision               | Other considerations | Corticosteroids | Placebo or no treatment | Relative (95% CI)                | Absolute (95% CI)                                       |                  |            |
| <b>Fetal death – In babies born from multiple pregnancies</b>                    |                   |                      |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 2  | randomized trials | not serious          | not serious   | not serious  | very serious <sup>c</sup> | none                 | 6/131 (4.6%)    | 10/121 (8.3%)           | <b>RR 0.53</b><br>(0.20 to 1.40) | <b>39 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 66 fewer to 33 more)  | ⊕⊕○○<br>LOW      | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Neonatal death – In babies born from singleton pregnancies</b>                |                   |                      |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 13   | randomized trials | serious <sup>d</sup> | not serious   | not serious  | not serious               | none                 | 360/4250 (8.5%) | 444/4203 (10.6%)        | <b>RR 0.80</b><br>(0.71 to 0.91) | <b>21 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 31 fewer to 10 fewer) | ⊕⊕⊕○<br>MODERATE | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Neonatal death – In babies born from multiple pregnancies</b>                 |                   |                      |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 3  | randomized trials | not serious          | not serious   | not serious  | serious <sup>b</sup>      | none                 | 66/415 (15.9%)  | 83/398 (20.9%)          | <b>RR 0.76</b><br>(0.57 to 1.02) | <b>50 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 90 fewer to 4 more)   | ⊕⊕⊕○<br>MODERATE | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Respiratory distress syndrome – In babies born from singleton pregnancies</b> |                   |                      |               |              |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |                  |            |
| 17   | randomized trials | serious <sup>d</sup> | not serious   | not serious  | not serious               | none                 | 310/3385 (9.2%) | 472/3346 (14.1%)        | <b>RR 0.65</b><br>(0.57 to 0.74) | <b>49 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 61 fewer to 37 fewer) | ⊕⊕⊕○<br>MODERATE | CRITICAL   |

| Certainty assessment   |                   |                      |               |                      |                           |                      | No of patients  |                         | Effect                           |   | Certainty   | Importance |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|------------|
| No of studies  | Study design      | Risk of bias         | Inconsistency | Indirectness         | Imprecision               | Other considerations | Corticosteroids | Placebo or no treatment | Relative (95% CI)                | Absolute (95% CI)                                       |   |            |
| <b>Respiratory distress syndrome – single or multiple pregnancy – In babies born from multiple pregnancies</b> |                   |                      |               |                      |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |   |            |
| 4  | randomized trials | serious <sup>d</sup> | not serious   | not serious          | serious <sup>b</sup>      | none                 | 44/167 (26.3%)  | 40/156 (25.6%)          | <b>RR 0.85</b><br>(0.61 to 1.20) | <b>38 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 100 fewer to 51 more) | <br>LOW      | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Intraventricular haemorrhage – In babies born from singleton pregnancies</b>                                |                   |                      |               |                      |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |   |            |
| 6  | randomized trials | not serious          | not serious   | serious <sup>e</sup> | not serious               | none                 | 37/2254 (1.6%)  | 71/2240 (3.2%)          | <b>RR 0.51</b><br>(0.35 to 0.75) | <b>16 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 21 fewer to 8 fewer)  | <br>MODERATE | CRITICAL   |
| <b>Intraventricular haemorrhage – In babies born from multiple pregnancies</b>                                 |                   |                      |               |                      |                           |                      |                 |                         |                                  |   |   |            |
| 1  | randomized trial  | not serious          | not serious   | serious <sup>e</sup> | very serious <sup>c</sup> | none                 | 2/81 (2.5%)     | 4/69 (5.8%)             | <b>RR 0.43</b><br>(0.08 to 2.26) | <b>33 fewer per 1000</b><br>(from 53 fewer to 73 more)  | <br>VERY LOW | CRITICAL   |

CI: Confidence interval; RR: Risk ratio; MD: Mean difference

#### Explanations

- Wide confidence interval crossing line of no effect; estimate based on small sample
- Wide confidence interval crossing line of no effect
- Wide confidence interval crossing line of no effect; estimate based on small sample and few events
- Most studies contributing data had design limitations
- In some trials only a subset of infants were screened for intravascular haemorrhage; some trials diagnosed intravascular haemorrhage at postmortem only