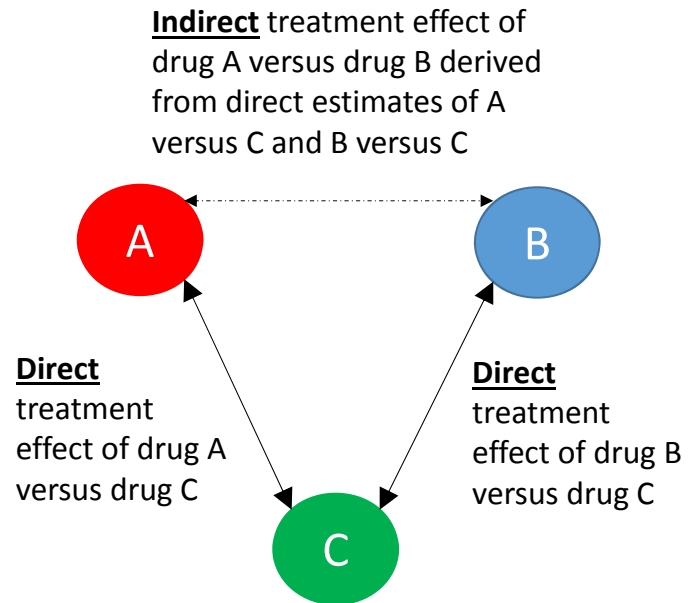


How does a network meta-analysis work?

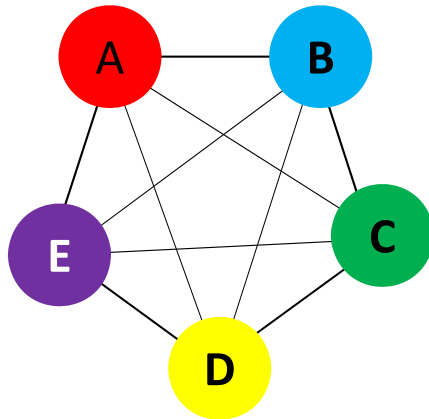
- ① Traditional Cochrane reviews generally compare one treatment against another.



This is helpful when there are only two important treatment options — but less helpful when nephrologists and patients need to trade-off the benefits and harms of several competing options at once.

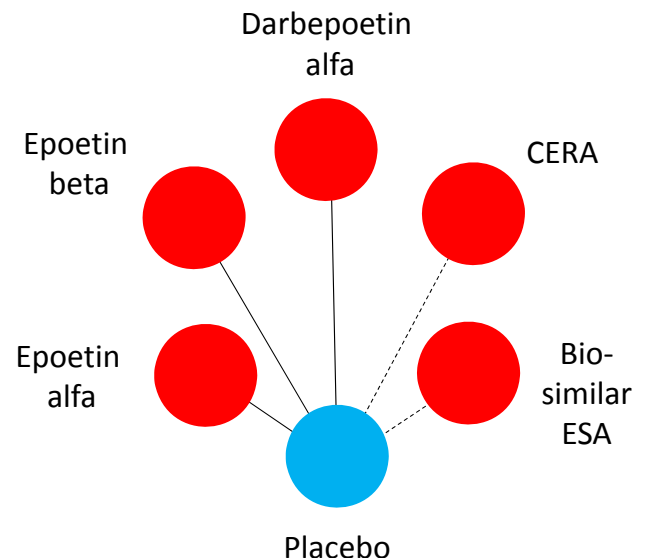


- ② Network reviews can compare all competing treatments for a given medical condition by using treatment estimates of several drugs within a single analysis.



Treatments can be compared even when head-to-head trials are not available, as long as treatments are compared with one other drug within the network.

- ③ For example, in this review, all erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) can be compared to placebo even when many placebo-trials are not available (for example, for biosimilar ESAs). *Dashed line indicates no direct trials were available to compare drug effects



For more information please refer to: Salanti G. Indirect and mixed-treatment comparison, network, or multiple-treatments meta-analysis: many names, many benefits, many concerns for the next generation evidence synthesis tool. Research Synthesis Methods. Volume 3, Issue 2, pages 80-97, June 2012