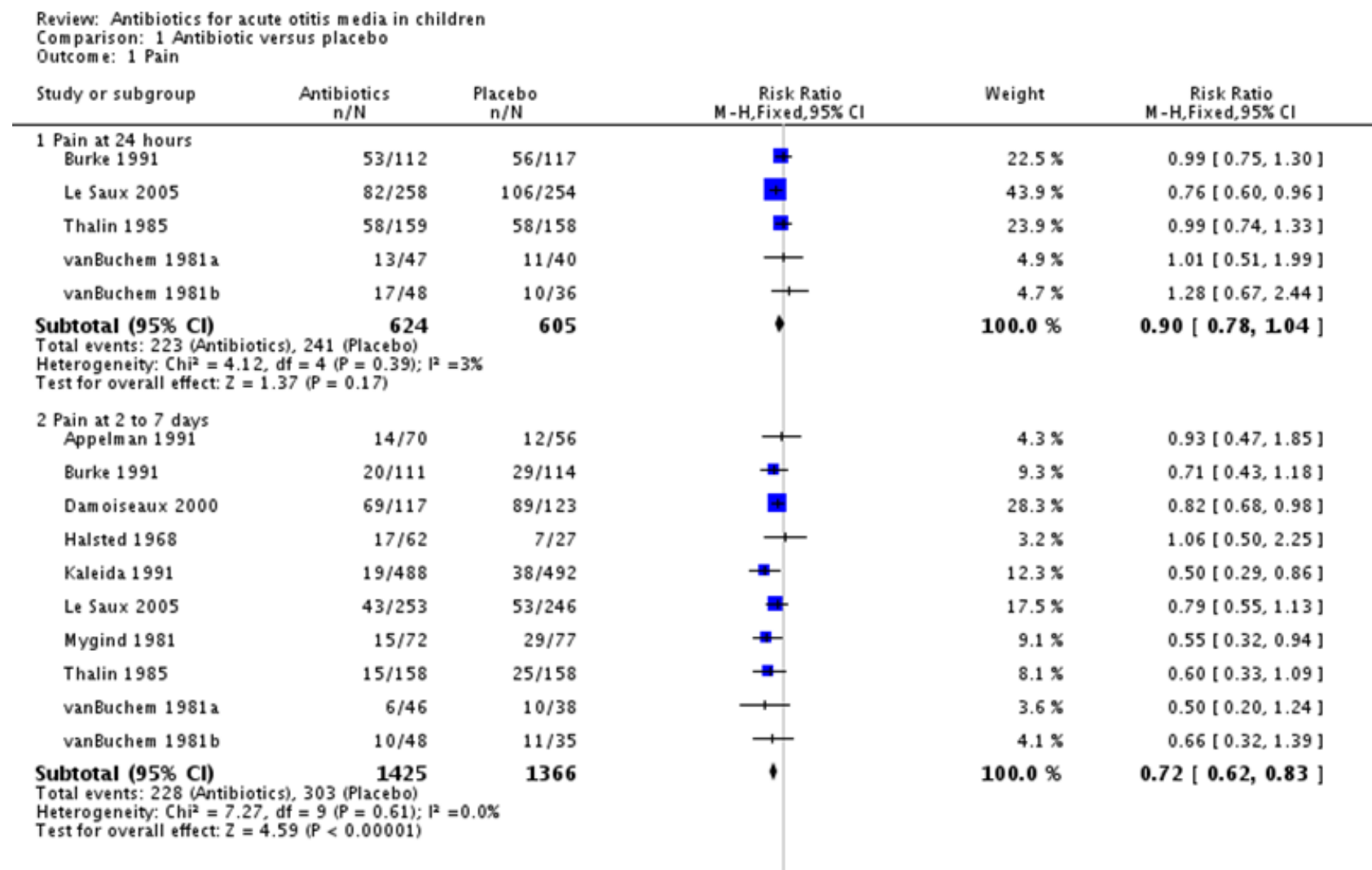


Exercise 1a: Binary data

This forest plot is taken from a Cochrane review of antibiotics for acute otitis media in children.



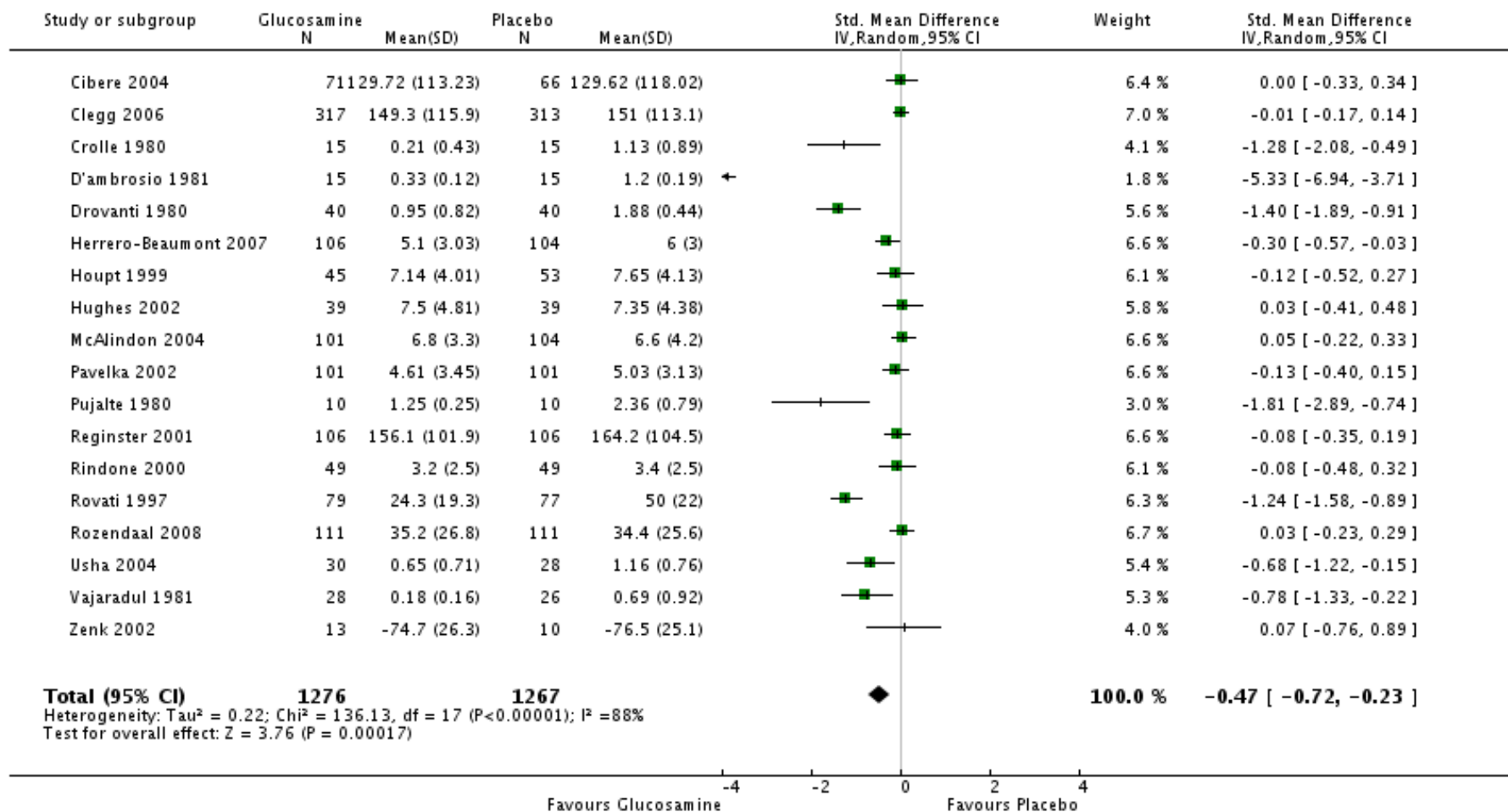
(From: Sanders S, Glasziou PP, Del Mar CB, Rovers MM. Antibiotics for acute otitis media in children. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2004, Issue 1.
 Art. No.: CD000219. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD000219.pub2)

1. What is the difference between antibiotics and placebo at 24 hours?
2. What is the difference between antibiotics and placebo at 2 to 7 days?
3. How would you express in words the results of this meta-analysis in the abstract of your Cochrane review?

Exercise 1b: Continuous data

This forest plot is taken from a Cochrane review of glucosamine therapy for treating osteoarthritis.

Review: Glucosamine therapy for treating osteoarthritis
 Comparison: 1 Glucosamine versus placebo
 Outcome: 1 Pain



(From: Towheed T, Maxwell L, Anastassiades TP, Shea B, Houpt JB, Welch V, Hochberg MC, Wells GA. Glucosamine therapy for treating osteoarthritis. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2005, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD002946. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD002946.pub2.)

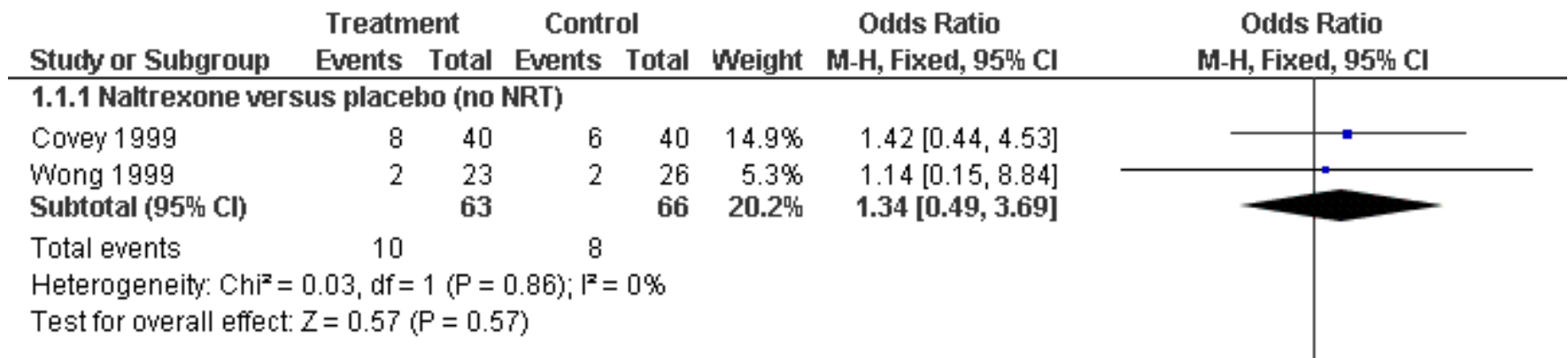
1. How would you express in words the results of this meta-analysis in the abstract of your Cochrane review?

2. Do you have enough information to decide whether or not this treatment is effective?

Exercise 2.

Here is one of the results from a review looking at opioid antagonists for smoking cessation.

This is the main comparison for naltrexone versus placebo in studies where both groups had no nicotine replacement therapy. The outcome here is abstinence at the longest follow-up time.



(taken from: David SP, Lancaster T, Stead LF, Evins AE, Cahill K. Opioid antagonists for smoking cessation. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2006, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD003086. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003086.pub2.)

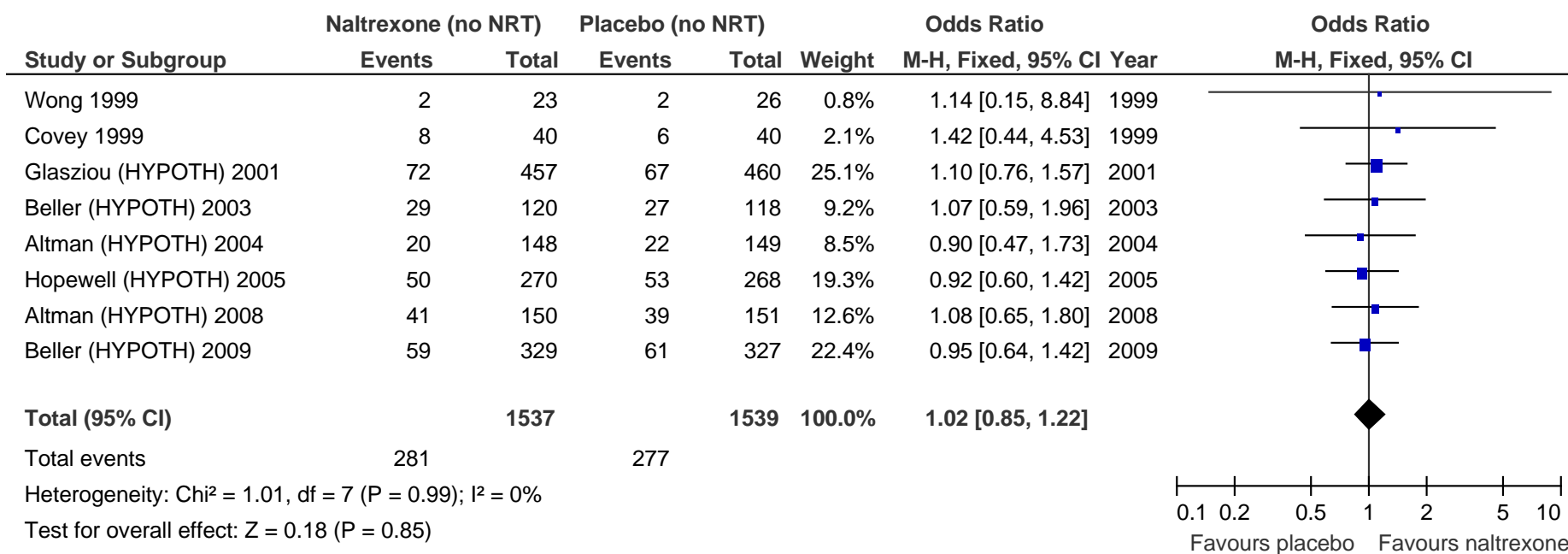
1. What is the result of this analysis? Which group is favoured? Is the result statistically significant? What do you think of the size of the effect? What does the confidence interval tell you?

2. How would you write up this result in your abstract?

Exercise 3.

A group of investigators got together at the 2000 Cochrane Colloquium, and decided the result in the previous exercise looked interesting. They decided to run their own trials over the next few years. The systematic review was (hypothetically!) updated in late 2009.

Here's the updated forest plot for the comparison of naltrexone versus placebo.



1. How has the result changed from the earlier one?

2. Would you change how you write up this result? If so, what would you write? If not, why not?