

Appendix i: search strategies

Search strategy to identify randomised controlled trials in Medline

SILVER PLATTER FORMAT (VERSION 3.10)

From: Dickersin K, Scherer R & Lefebvre C (1994) **Identifying relevant studies for systematic reviews.** *British Medical Journal*, **309**, 1286–1291.

- #1 (Subject search strategy)
- #2 (TG=ANIMAL) not ((TG=HUMAN) and (TG=ANIMAL))
- #3 #1 not #2
- #4 RANDOMISED-CONTROLLED-TRIAL in PT
- #5 CONTROLLED-CLINICAL-TRIAL in PT
- #6 RANDOMISED-CONTROLLED-TRIALS
- #7 RANDOM-ALLOCATION
- #8 DOUBLE-BLIND-METHOD
- #9 SINGLE-BLIND-METHOD
- #10 CLINICAL-TRIAL in PT
- #11 explode CLINICAL-TRIALS/ ALL SUBHEADINGS
- #12 (clin* near trial*) in TI
- #13 (clin* near trial*) in AB
- #14 (singl* or doubl* or trebl* or tripl*) near (blind* or mask*)
- #15 (#14 in TI) or (#14 in AB)
- #16 PLACEBOS
- #17 placebo* in TI
- #18 placebo* in AB
- #19 random* in TI
- #20 random* in AB
- #21 RESEARCH-DESIGN
- #22 TG=COMPARATIVE-STUDY
- #23 explode EVALUATION-STUDIES/ ALL SUBHEADINGS
- #24 FOLLOW-UP-STUDIES
- #25 PROSPECTIVE-STUDIES
- #26 control* or prospectiv* or volunteer*
- #27 (#26 in TI) or (#26 in AB)
- #28 #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9
- #29 #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20 or #21
- #30 #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #27
- #31 #28 or #29 or #30
- #32 #3 and #31

- Upper case denotes controlled vocabulary.
- Lower case denotes free-text terms.
- Readers wishing to run this search strategy are recommended to seek the advice of a trained medical librarian.

From: Dickersin K, Scherer R & Lefebvre C (1994) **Identifying relevant studies for systematic reviews.** *British Medical Journal*, **309**, 1286–1291.

- #1 RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL.pt.
- #2 CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL.pt.
- #3 RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIALS.sh.
- #4 RANDOM ALLOCATION.sh.
- #5 DOUBLE BLIND METHOD.sh.
- #6 SINGLE-BLIND METHOD.sh.
- #7 or/#1–6
- #8 ANIMAL.sh. not HUMAN.sh.
- #9 #7 not #8

- #10 CLINICAL TRIAL.pt.
- #11 exp CLINICAL TRIALS
- #12 (clin\$ adj25 trial\$.ti,ab.
- #13 ((singl\$ or doubl\$ or trebl\$ or tripl\$) adj25 (blind\$ or mask\$)).ti,ab.
- #14 PLACEBOS.sh.
- #15 placebo\$.ti,ab.
- #16 random\$.ti,ab.
- #17 RESEARCH DESIGN.sh.
- #18 or/#10–17
- #19 #18 not #8
- #20 #19 not #9

- #21 COMPARATIVE STUDY.sh.
- #22 exp EVALUATION STUDIES
- #23 FOLLOW UP STUDIES.sh.
- #24 PROSPECTIVE STUDIES.sh.
- #25 (control\$ or prospectiv\$ or volunteer\$.ti,ab.
- #26 or/#21–25
- #27 #26 not #8
- #28 #26 not (#9 or #20)
- #29 #9 or #20 or #28

- Upper case denotes controlled vocabulary.
- Lower case denotes free-text terms.
- Readers wishing to run this search strategy are recommended to seek the advice of a trained medical librarian.

Search strategy to identify systematic reviews and meta-analyses in Medline (from the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, York)

OID VERSION

● SEARCH STRATEGY 1: HIGH SENSITIVITY, LOW PRECISION ●

Best for the researcher keen to retrieve all systematic reviews while retaining a reasonable level of precision.

- #1 meta.ab
- #2 synthesis.ab
- #3 literature.ab
- #4 randomized.hw
- #5 published.ab
- #6 meta-analysis.pt
- #7 extraction.ab
- #8 trials.hw
- #9 controlled.hw
- #10 medline.ab
- #11 selection.ab
- #12 sources.ab
- #13 trials.ab
- #14 review.ab
- #15 review.pt
- #16 articles.ab
- #17 reviewed.ab
- #18 english.ab
- #19 language.ab
- #20 comment.pt
- #21 letter.pt
- #22 editorial.pt
- #23 animal/
- #24 human/
- #25 #23 not (#23 and #24)
- #26 (Your subject terms)
- #27 #26 not (#20 or #21 or #22 or #25)
- #28 or/#1-19
- #29 #27 and #28

● SEARCH STRATEGY 2: HIGH PRECISION, LOW SENSITIVITY ●

Best for the busy searcher who has access only to Medline.

- #1 medline.ab
- #2 comment.pt
- #3 letter.pt
- #4 editorial.pt
- #5 animal/
- #6 human/
- #7 #5 not (#5 and #6)
- #8 (Your subject terms)
- #9 #8 not (#2 or #3 or #4 or #7)
- #10 #1 and #9

SILVERPLATTER VERSION

Adapted from Boynton J, Glanville J, McDaid D, *et al* (1998) **Identifying systematic reviews in medline: Developing an approach to search strategy design.** *Journal of Information Science*, 24, 137–157.

- #1 (Subject search strategy)
- #2 (TG=ANIMAL) not ((TG=HUMAN) and (TG=ANIMAL))
- #3 #1 not #2
- #4 REVIEW-ACADEMIC in PT
- #5 REVIEW-TUTORIAL in PT
- #6 META-ANALYSIS in PT
- #7 META-ANALYSIS
- #8 SYSTEMATIC* near REVIEW*
- #9 SYSTEMATIC* near OVERVIEW*
- #10 META-ANALY* or METAANALY* or (META ANALY*)
- #11 #10 in TI
- #12 #10 in AB
- #13 #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #11 or #12
- #14 #3 and #13

● SEARCH STRATEGY FOR THE SENSITIVITY MAXIMISER ●

- #1 (Subject search strategy)
- #2 (TG=ANIMAL) not ((TG=HUMAN) and (TG=ANIMAL))
- #3 #1 not #2
- #4 meta in AB
- #5 medline in AB
- #6 synthesis in AB
- #7 selection in AB
- #8 literature in AB
- #9 sources in AB
- #10 randomized in MESH
- #11 trials in AB
- #12 published in AB
- #13 review in AB
- #14 meta-analysis in PT
- #15 review in PT
- #16 extraction in AB
- #17 articles in AB
- #18 trials in MESH
- #19 reviewed in AB
- #20 controlled in MESH
- #21 english in AB
- #22 search in AB
- #23 language in AB
- #24 #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11 or #12 or #13 or #14 or #15
or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20 or #21 or #22 or #23
- #25 #3 and #24