

Search methods [as supplied by the author]

The search for evidence was based on a Clinical Evidence search and appraisal carried out in April 2006. This in turn formed the evidence base for my updated Clinical Evidence Influenza chapter.

The following databases were used to identify studies for the chapter: Medline 1966 to April 2006, Embase 1980 to April 2006, and The Cochrane Library up to issue 1, 2006. Additional searches were carried out on the following websites: NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) – publications, Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE) and the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) database; Turning Research into Practice (TRIP) and the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance. Abstracts of studies retrieved in the search were assessed independently by two information specialists using predetermined criteria to identify relevant studies. These included: systematic reviews and randomised controlled trials (at least single blinded) with laboratory confirmed influenza, or influenza-like illness outcomes (which are clinically indistinguishable), measuring clinical efficacy (antibody responses), with a minimum number of 20 individuals per trial and at least 80% of them followed up. Non-randomised evidence was included only when it was included in a systematic review. There was no minimum length of follow up. The searches compared treatments with placebo or no intervention to establish the absolute efficacy or effectiveness of vaccines for outcomes such as death, complications, hospitalisation, and transmission. In the BMJ paper I only considered evidence from upto date systematic reviews, but the original Clinical Evidence search included randomised controlled trials published after the relevant systematic review. No studies, either alone or included within a systematic review tested the effects of vaccines on experimentally induced influenza (i.e. in which volunteers were artificially infected).

Below I have reproduced the search strings used for the MEDLINE and EMBASE searches (for randomised controlled trials and systematic reviews) and their yield.

Ovid MEDLINE(R)

001 ("review" or "review academic" or "review tutorial").pt. 386566

002 (medline or medlars or embase).tw,sh. 11319

003 (scisearch or psycinfo or psycinfo).tw,sh. 576

004 (psychlit or psyclit).tw,sh. 514

005 cinahl.tw,sh. 1115

006 ((hand adj2 search\$) or (manual\$ adj2 search\$)).tw,sh. 1473

007 (electronic database\$ or bibliographic database\$ or computer 1948

i?ed database\$ or online database\$).tw,sh.

008 (pooling or pooled or mantel haenszel).tw,sh. 7855

009 (peto or dersimonian or der simonian or fixed effect).tw,sh. 548

010 or/2-9 20171

011 1 and 10 9763

012 meta-analysis.pt. 6018

013 meta-analysis.sh. 2895

014 (meta-analys\$ or meta analys\$ or metaanalys\$).tw,sh. 8973

015 (systematic\$ adj5 review\$).tw,sh. 6296

016 (systematic\$ adj5 overview\$).tw,sh. 188

017 (quantitativ\$ adj5 review\$).tw,sh. 607

018 (quantitativ\$ adj5 overview\$).tw,sh. 55

019 (quantitativ\$ adj5 synthesis\$).tw,sh. 231

020 (methodologic\$ adj5 review\$).tw,sh. 964

021 (methodologic\$ adj5 overview\$).tw,sh. 55

022 (integrative research review\$ or research integration).tw. 36

023 or/12-22 17035

024 11 or 23 23401

025 (random\$ or placebo\$).tw,sh,pt. 170183

026 ("clinical trial" or "controlled clinical trial" or "randomized controlled trial").pt. 131419

027 ((double or single or triple or treble) and (blind\$ or mask\$)).tw,sh. 25058

028 or/25-27 229401

029 24 and 28 9648

030 1 or 23 395254

031 exp Randomized controlled trials/ 22108

032 "randomized controlled trial".pt. 69443

033 ("clinical trial" or "controlled clinical trial").pt. 131419

034 (random\$ or placebo\$).ti,ab,sh. 156621

035 ((singl\$ or double\$ or triple\$ or treble\$) and (blind\$ or mask\$)).tw,sh. 26795

036 or/31-35 229902

037 exp Influenza/ 3759

038 (influenza or flu).ti. 4914

039 (influenza or flu).ab. /freq=3 2691

040 or/37-39 5892

041 24 and 40 70

042 36 and 40 554

043 limit 42 to latest update [limit ignored during autoalert processing] 554

044 limit 43 to updaterrange=medl(20050126112412-20050202202827] 2

EMBASE

001 exp review/ 87974

002 (medline or medlars or embase).tw,sh. 2870

003 (scisearch or psychlit or psyclit).tw,sh. 100

004 (psycinfo or psychinfo or science citation index).tw,sh. 234

005 cinahl.tw,sh. 147

006 ((hand adj2 search\$) or (manual\$ adj2 search\$) or (literature adj2 search\$)).tw,sh. 1125

007 (electronic database\$ or bibliographic database\$ or online database\$ or computeri?ed database\$).tw,sh. 668

008 ((pooled or pooling) and analys\$).tw,sh. 803

009 (peto or dersimonian or der simonian or fixed effect or mantel haenszel).tw,sh. 165

010 or/2-9 4664

011 1 and 10 2506

012 exp meta analysis/ 3151

013 meta?analys\$.tw,sh. 3192

014 (systematic\$ adj5 review\$).tw,sh. 3098

015 (systematic\$ adj5 overview\$).tw,sh. 34

016 (quantitativ\$ adj5 review\$).tw,sh. 1454

017 (quantitativ\$ adj5 overview\$).tw,sh. 11

018 (methodologic\$ adj5 review\$).tw,sh. 137

019 (methodologic\$ adj5 overview\$.tw,sh. 17

020 ((integrative adj5 research adj5 review\$) or (research adj5 integrat\$)).tw. 257

021 (quantitativ\$ adj5 synthesi\$).tw,sh. 181

022 or/12-21 7315

023 11 or 22 8703

024 exp randomized controlled trial/ 11458

025 (random\$ or placebo\$.mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer name] 35483

026 ((double or single or triple or treble) and (blind\$ or mask\$)).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer name] 5212

027 "##'Controlled clinical trial\$.mp.##"/ or Controlled study/or "controlled clinical trial\$.mp. 228483

028 or/24-27 241762

029 23 and 28 2858

030 1 or 22 89952

031 exp randomized controlled trial/ 11458

032 (random\$ or placebo\$.ti,ab,sh. 35483

033 ((double or single or triple or treble) and (blind\$ or mask\$)).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer name] 5212

034 controlled clinical trial\$.tw,sh. 752

035 or/31-34 36302

036 exp Influenza/ 1221

037 (influenza or flu).ti. or (influenza or flu).ab. /freq=3 1120

038 36 or 37 1720

039 23 and 38 29

040 35 and 38 166

041 limit 40 to latest update [limit ignored during autoalertocessing] pr 166

042 limit 41 to updaterrange=emed6(20050127140215-20050203110912] 1

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