

Search strategy

Published studies were identified through electronic searches not limited to the English language using MEDLINE, EMBASE, BIOSIS and the Science Citation Index databases. Electronic searches were supplemented by scanning reference lists of articles identified for all relevant studies (including review articles), by hand searching of relevant journals and by correspondence with study investigators. The computer-based searches combined search terms related to fatty acids, cardiovascular disease and study design without language restriction.

(i) MEDLINE strategy to identify relevant exposures:

("Fatty Acids"[Mesh] OR "Fatty Acids, Unsaturated"[Mesh] OR "fatty acids, omega-3"[Mesh Terms] OR "omega-3"[All Fields] OR "omega-3 fatty acids"[All Fields] OR "omega 3 fatty acids"[All Fields] OR "eicosapentaenoic acid"[Mesh Terms] OR "eicosapentaenoic acid"[All Fields] OR "docosahexaenoic acids"[All Fields] OR "fishes"[Mesh Terms] OR "fishes"[All Fields] OR "fish intake"[All Fields])

(ii) MEDLINE strategy to identify relevant disease outcomes:

("Stroke"[MeSH] OR "cerebrovascular disorders"[Mesh] OR "cerebrovascular"[All Fields] OR "Cardiovascular Diseases"[Mesh] OR "Cerebral Infarction"[Mesh] OR "ischaemic stroke"[All Fields] OR "ischemic stroke"[All Fields] OR "Brain Ischemia"[Mesh] OR "Intracranial Arteriosclerosis"[Mesh] OR "intracranial hemorrhages"[Mesh] OR "hemorrhagic stroke"[All Fields])

(iii) MEDLINE strategy to identify relevant study designs:

("Clinical Trial "[Publication Type] OR "Prospective Studies"[Mesh] OR "Follow-Up Studies"[Mesh] OR "Randomized Controlled Trials as Topic"[Mesh] OR "Nested Case Control Studies" [All Fields])

Parts i, ii and iii were combined using 'AND' to search MEDLINE. Each part was specifically translated for searching alternative databases.