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## **e-Appendix 1: Search strategy**

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A bibliographic search was performed on the PubMed database of the US National Library of Medicine for articles published from January 1990 to July 2003, using the following key words or associations: "cobalamin," "vitamin B<sub>12</sub>," "cobalamin deficiency," "vitamin B<sub>12</sub> deficiency," "food-cobalamin malabsorption," "pernicious anemia," "elderly patients."

Restricted: age ≤ 65 years; English- or French-language publication; published from Jan. 1, 1990, to July 1, 2003; human subjects; clinical trial, review or guidelines.

Results: 493 English papers and 32 French papers.

All of the English and French abstracts were reviewed by at least 2 senior researchers in our working group. Two senior researchers selected the papers used in the study.

All of the French papers (n = 32) were selected and read. A total of 395 papers published in the most prestigious North American and European medical journals were selected and read.

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