

Appendix A: Search strategy

MEDLINE

| | Searches | Results | Annotations |
|----|--|---------|-------------|
| 1 | equivalence trial/ | 503 | |
| 2 | equivalence trials as topic/ | 282 | |
| 3 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivilency or equivilencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab,kf. | 70165 | |
| 4 | or/1-3 | 70414 | |
| 5 | mo.fs. | 561893 | |
| 6 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab,kf. | 1493002 | |
| 7 | mortality/ or cause of death/ or fatal outcome/ or hospital mortality/ or infant mortality/ or maternal mortality/ | 213608 | |
| 8 | or/5-7 [****mortality terms****] | 1834719 | |
| 9 | 4 and 8 [****base clinical set****] | 9115 | |
| 10 | randomized controlled trial.pt. | 500401 | |
| 11 | controlled clinical trial.pt. | 93574 | |
| 12 | randomized.ab. | 469732 | |
| 13 | placebo.ab. | 205181 | |
| 14 | drug therapy.fs. | 2180485 | |
| 15 | randomly.ab. | 327066 | |
| 16 | trial.ab. | 494306 | |
| 17 | groups.ab. | 2008069 | |
| 18 | or/10-17 | 4632786 | |

| | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 19 | exp animals/ not humans.sh. | 4672546 |
| 20 | 18 not 19 [****Cochrane Handbook Highly Sensitive Search Strategy for 4014138 identifying randomized trials (Box 6.4.c 2008 version)****] | |
| 21 | 9 and 20 [****Final results****] | 3721 |
| 22 | limit 21 to (english language and humans and yr="1989 -Current") | 3212 |

Medline-in-Process

| | Searches | Results | Annotations |
|----|--|---------|-------------|
| 1 | equivalenc*adj3 trial*.ti,ab,kf. | 0 | |
| 2 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivilency or equivilencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab,kf. | 70227 | |
| 3 | or/1-2 | 70227 | |
| 4 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab,kf. | 1493992 | |
| 5 | 3 and 4 [****Base clinical set****] | 5800 | |
| 6 | ((randomized or randomised or controlled) adj3 trial*).ti,ab,kf. | 401027 | |
| 7 | placebo.ab. | 205277 | |
| 8 | randomly.ab. | 327266 | |
| 9 | trial.ab. | 494765 | |
| 10 | groups.ab. | 2009271 | |
| 11 | or/6-10 [***Trial terms***] | 2722197 | |
| 12 | 5 and 11 [****Final results****] | 2313 | |

Medline Epubs Ahead of Print

| | Searches | Results | Annotations |
|----|--|---------|-------------|
| 1 | equivalenc*adj3 trial*.ti,ab,kf. | 0 | |
| 2 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivalency or equivilencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab,kf. | 70227 | |
| 3 | or/1-2 | 70227 | |
| 4 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab,kf. | 1493992 | |
| 5 | 3 and 4 [****Base clinical set****] | 5800 | |
| 6 | ((randomized or randomised or controlled) adj3 trial*).ti,ab,kf. | 401027 | |
| 7 | placebo.ab. | 205277 | |
| 8 | randomly.ab. | 327266 | |
| 9 | trial.ab. | 494765 | |
| 10 | groups.ab. | 2009271 | |
| 11 | or/6-10 [***Trial terms***] | 2722197 | |
| 12 | 5 and 11 [****Final results****] | 2313 | |
| 13 | equivalenc*adj3 trial*.ti,ab,kf. | 0 | |
| 14 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivalency or equivilencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab,kf. | 70227 | |
| 15 | or/13-14 | 70227 | |
| 16 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab,kf. | 1493992 | |
| 17 | 15 and 16 [****Base clinical set****] | 5800 | |
| 18 | ((randomized or randomised or controlled) adj3 trial*).ti,ab,kf. | 401027 | |
| 19 | placebo.ab. | 205277 | |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 20 | randomly.ab. | 327266 |
| 21 | trial.ab. | 494765 |
| 22 | groups.ab. | 2009271 |
| 23 | or/18-22 [***Trial terms***] | 2722197 |
| 24 | 17 and 23 [****Final results****] | 2313 |

Embase Classic+Embase databases (OvidSP)

| | Searches | Results | Annotations |
|----|--|---------|-------------|
| 1 | equivalenc*adj3 trial*.ti,ab,kf. | 0 | |
| 2 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivlency or equivlencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab,kf. | 70227 | |
| 3 | or/1-2 | 70227 | |
| 4 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab,kf. | 1493992 | |
| 5 | 3 and 4 [****Base clinical set****] | 5800 | |
| 6 | ((randomized or randomised or controlled) adj3 trial*).ti,ab,kf. | 401027 | |
| 7 | placebo.ab. | 205277 | |
| 8 | randomly.ab. | 327266 | |
| 9 | trial.ab. | 494765 | |
| 10 | groups.ab. | 2009271 | |
| 11 | or/6-10 [***Trial terms***] | 2722197 | |
| 12 | 5 and 11 [****Final results****] | 2313 | |
| 13 | equivalenc*adj3 trial*.ti,ab,kf. | 0 | |

| | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 14 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivilency or equivilencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab,kf. | 70227 |
| 15 | or/13-14 | 70227 |
| 16 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab,kf. | 1493992 |
| 17 | 15 and 16 [****Base clinical set****] | 5800 |
| 18 | ((randomized or randomised or controlled) adj3 trial*).ti,ab,kf. | 401027 |
| 19 | placebo.ab. | 205277 |
| 20 | randomly.ab. | 327266 |
| 21 | trial.ab. | 494765 |
| 22 | groups.ab. | 2009271 |
| 23 | or/18-22 [***Trial terms***] | 2722197 |
| 24 | 17 and 23 [****Final results****] | 2313 |
| 25 | (equivalen* adj2 trial*).ti,ab. | 758 |
| 26 | (noninferiority or non-inferiority or equivalence or equivilency or equivilencies or inferiority or "NI margin*" or "delta margin*" or (prespecified adj2 margin*) or margins).ti,ab. | 69786 |
| 27 | or/25-26 [***equivalency or non-inferiority terms****] | 69985 |
| 28 | (mortality or mortalities or death or deaths or dying or fatal*).ti,ab. | 1473665 |
| 29 | mortality/ or cancer mortality/ or childhood mortality/ or embryo mortality/ or fetus mortality/ or infant mortality/ or maternal mortality/ or prenatal mortality/ or surgical mortality/ or perinatal mortality/ or newborn mortality/ | 77281 |
| 30 | death/ or "cause of death"/ or dying/ or heart death/ or sudden death/ or child death/ or newborn death/ | 75385 |
| 31 | or/28-30 [****mortality terms****] | 1511412 |

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| 32 | 27 and 31 [****Base clinical set****] | 5823 |
| 33 | randomized controlled trial/ | 500622 |
| 34 | double-blind procedure/ | 0 |
| 35 | single-blind procedure/ | 0 |
| 36 | crossover-procedure/ | 0 |
| 37 | random*.ti,ab,kw. | 1109854 |
| 38 | factorial*.ti,ab,kw. | 29313 |
| 39 | crossover*.ti,ab,kw. | 62938 |
| 40 | "cross over".ti,ab,kw. | 22789 |
| 41 | "cross-over*".ti,ab,kw. | 23015 |
| 42 | placebo*.ti,ab,kw. | 212808 |
| 43 | (doubl* adj5 blind*).ti,ab,kw. | 149043 |
| 44 | (singl* adj5 blind*).ti,ab,kw. | 22640 |
| 45 | assign*.ti,ab,kw. | 308920 |
| 46 | allocat*.ti,ab,kw. | 115873 |
| 47 | volunteer*.ti,ab,kw. | 189496 |
| 48 | or/33-47 [****Cochrane Box 6.3.2.2 EMBASE sensitive TherapyTreatment Effectiveness Filter terms****] | 1731635 |
| 49 | 32 and 48 [***Cochrane trial filter****] | 1802 |
| 50 | ct.fs. | 0 |
| 51 | 32 and 50 [***clinical trial subheading****] | 0 |
| 52 | limit 32 to (randomized controlled trial or controlled clinical trial or multicenter study) | 1230 |

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| 53 | or/49,51-52 [****Final results****] | 1974 |
| 54 | limit 53 to conference abstract [Limit not valid in Ovid MEDLINE(R),Ovid MEDLINE(R) Daily Update,Ovid MEDLINE(R) In-Process,Ovid MEDLINE(R) Publisher; records were retained] | 1974 |
| 55 | 53 not 54 [***Conference abstracts removed****] | 0 |
| 56 | limit 55 to (human and english language and yr="1989 -Current") | 0 |