APPENDIX A: SEARCH STRATEGIES

MEDLINE (OVID interface)
1. search$.tw.
2. exp "information storage and retrieval"/ or Medical Informatics/
3. Data Compression/
4. 2 not 3
5. or/1,4
6. quality control/ or Evaluation Studies/ or "reproducibility of results"/
8. or/6-7
9. (quality or evaluat$).tw.
10. (precision or recall or sensitivity or relevance or specificity).tw.
11. (performance adj2 (measur$ or indicat$ or assess$)).tw.
12. "Sensitivity and Specificity"/
13. or/10-12
14. (error$ or mistake$ or failure$ or inaccura$ or misspell$).tw.
15. (MeSH or (subject adj2 heading$) or (controlled adj2 vocabulary) or redundan$ or explod$ or explos$ or spell$ or Medline).tw.
16. truncat$.tw.
17. (truncat$ adj6 (protein$ or gene$)).mp.
18. 16 not 17
19. exp Documentation/
20. exp Molecular Sequence Data/
21. 19 not 20
22. or/15,18,21
23. EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE/
24. META-ANALYSIS/
26. "Review Literature"/
27. or/23-26
28. "INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL"/st [Standards]
29. and/27-28
30. and/5,8,13
31. and/5,13-14
32. and/9,13,22
33. or/29-32
34. "cochrane database of systematic reviews".jn.
35. 33 not 34
36. limit 35 to yr=1980 - 2005

HEALTH STAR (OVID): Same as MEDLINE above

HAPI (OVID interface)
search$.mp

THE COCHRANE LIBRARY
(Wiley interface)
**Search #1:**
(KW=(precision or recall or pertinence or performance or relevance or exhaustivity or feedback or sensitivity or specificity or efficien*) or DE=(“Retrieval performance measures” or “Relevance feedback”)) and (kw=(controlled vocabulary or MeSH or explos* or explod* or spell* or truncat* or redundan*) or (DE=(“Non Boolean strategies” or “Multiple database searches” or Browsing or “Offline searching” or “Remote searching”” or “Search strategies” or “Boolean strategies” or “Full text searching”) or KW=(search* or Ranking) and kw=(evaluat* or rate or rating or assess* or quality or validat* or accura* or proficien* or effectiv*)) or (kw=error* or mistake* or failure*))

**Search #2:**
(DE=Searching and DE=Evaluation) NOT (Search #1)

**CINAHL: Cumulative Index to Nursing & Allied Health Literature**
*(OVID interface)*

1. search$.tw.
2. Medical Informatics/ or exp Information Retrieval/ or Information Science/
3. or/1-2
4. quality control/ or Evaluation Studies/ or "reproducibility of results"/
5. (quality adj2 assess$).tw.
6. or/4-5
7. (quality or evaluat$).tw.
8. (precision or recall or sensitivity or relevance or specificity).tw.
9. (performance adj2 (measur$ or indicat$ or assess$)).tw.
10. "Sensitivity and Specificity"/
11. or/8-10
12. (error$ or mistake$ or failure$ or inaccura$ or misspell$).tw.
13. (MeSH or (subject adj2 heading$) or (controlled adj2 vocabulary) or redundan$ or explod$ or explos$ or spell$ or Medline).tw.
14. truncat$.tw.
15. (truncat$ adj6 (protein$ or gene$)).mp.
16. 14 not 15
17. exp Documentation/ or exp Bibliographic Control/
18. or/13,16-17
19. and/3,6,11
20. and/3,11-12
21. and/7,11,18
22. or/19-21
24. 22 not 23
25. limit 24 to yr=1980-2005

**PsycINFO**
*(Scholarly literature in the behavioral sciences and mental health)*
*(OVID interface)*

1. search$.tw.
2. exp automated information retrieval/
3. or/1-2
4. quality control/ or evaluation criteria/
5. (quality adj2 assess$).tw.
6. or/4-5
7. (quality or evaluat$).tw.
8. (precision or recall or sensitivity or relevance or specificity).tw.
9. (performance adj2 (measur$ or indicat$ or assess$)).tw.
10. or/8-9
11. (error$ or mistake$ or failure$ or inaccura$ or misspell$).tw.
12. (MeSH or (subject adj2 heading$) or (controlled adj2 vocabulary) or redundan$ or explod$ or explos$ or spell$ or Medline).tw.
13. truncat$.tw.
14. (truncat$ adj6 (protein$ or gene$)).mp.
15. 13 not 14
16. or/12,15
17. and/3,6,10
18. and/3,10-11
19. and/7,10,16
20. or/17-19
21. limit 20 to yr=1980-2005

Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA)
(CSA interface)
LISA Search 1
KW=(precision or recall or pertinence or performance or relevance or exhaustivity or feedback or sensitivity or specificity or efficien*) and (kw=((controlled vocabulary) or MeSH or explos* or explod* or spell* or truncat* or redundan*) or ((DE=“Non Boolean strategies” or Browsing or “Boolean strategies”) or KW=(search* or ranking)) and kw=(evaluat* or rate or rating or assess* or quality or validat* or accura* or proficien* or effectiv*)) or kw=(error* or mistake* or failure*))

LISA Search 2
(DE=Searching and DE=Evaluation) not (KW=(precision or recall or pertinence or performance or relevance or exhaustivity or feedback or sensitivity or specificity or efficien*) and (kw=((controlled vocabulary) or MeSH or explos* or explod* or spell* or truncat* or redundan*) or ((DE=“Non Boolean strategies” or Browsing or “Boolean strategies”) or KW=(search* or ranking)) and kw=(evaluat* or rate or rating or assess* or quality or validat* or accura* or proficien* or effectiv*)) or kw=(error* or mistake* or failure*))

Scopus - a comprehensive database for scientific, technical and medical information
(Scopus web interface)

((TITLE-ABS-KEY(quality)) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY(precision) OR TITLE-ABSKEY(recall) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(sensitivity) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(specificity) OR TITLEABS- KEY(relevance) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(performance W/2 measure) OR
TITLE-ABSKEY( performance W/2 indicator) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(performance W/2 assessment)) AND (((TITLE-ABS-KEY(truncat*)) AND NOT (TITLE-ABS-KEY(truncat* W/6 protein) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(truncat* W/6 gene))) OR (TITLE-ABS-KEY(mesh) OR TITLE-ABSKEY( subject W/2 heading) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(controlled W/2 vocabulary)) OR TITLEABS- KEY(redundancies) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(redundant) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(explode) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(explosion) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(spelling) OR TITLE-ABSKEY( medline))) OR ((TITLE-ABS-KEY(search*)) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY(precision) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(recall) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(specificity) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(relevance) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(performance W/2 measure) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(performance W/2 indicator) OR TITLE-ABSKEY( performance W/2 assessment)) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY(error) OR TITLE-ABSKEY( mistake) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(failure) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(inaccurate) OR TITLEABS- KEY(misspelling) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(misspelled)) OR ((TITLE-ABSKEY( search*)) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY(quality)) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY(precision) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(recall) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(sensitivity) OR TITLE-ABSKEY( specificity) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(relevance) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(performance W/2 measure) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY(performance W/2 indicator) OR TITLE-ABSKEY( performance W/2 assessment))) AND PUBYEAR AFT 1979 AND (EXCLUDE(EXACTSRCTITLE, "Cochrane database of systematic reviews (Online : Update Software")
APPENDIX B: DATA EXTRACTION AND ABSTRACTION FORM

Data abstraction form for information retrieval research

1. Which of the following are discussed? (check all that apply)
   - Spelling mistakes
   - Spelling variants
   - Truncation
   - Search logic & organization
   - Logical operators AND OR NOT ADJ
   - Wrong line number
   - Subject headings and natural language terms combined
   - Subject headings missing
   - Natural language terms missing
   - Irrelevant subject headings/ explosion
   - Irrelevant natural language terms included?
   - Subject headings exploded even though no narrower terms exist?
   - Redundancies
   - Search strategy been adapted for each database
   - Other errors (explain)

2. This paper presents: (check all that apply)
   - Research evidence regarding search performance
   - Theoretical rationale for impact on search performance
   - Frequency of error in a particular population
   - Can’t tell
   - None of the above

3. The major impact discussed is: (check all that apply)
   - Recall (sensitivity)
   - Precision
   - Specificity
   - Cost/Time
   - Peer reviewing
   - Other (describe)
   - Can't tell
   - None of the above

4. Summarize the evidence, noting page number after each statement. Place cut/paste in quotations please.
5. Reference number of any potentially useful references we should check, followed by brief statement of the topic.

[Blank]

**Data extraction form for scales**

1. Does it address the electronic search strategy?
   - o Yes
   - o No

2. Does it address the search plan (e.g., choice of databases, non-electronic methods, etc.)?
   - o Yes
   - o No

3. Is it validated?
   - o Yes
   - o No

4. Is it evidence-based?
   - o Yes (describe/citing evidence)
   - o No

5. Characterize the type of tool:
   - Reporting guideline
   - Tool for evaluating training
   - Tool for peer reviewing or quality assessment
   - Other (specify)

**Data abstraction form for added elements**

1. Which of the following are discussed? (check all that apply)
   - Additional Fields
   - Limits
   - Conceptualization
   - Other

**Complete the appropriate sections:**

**Evidence regarding Additional Fields**

2. This paper presents: (check all that apply)
   - Research evidence regarding search performance
   - Theoretical rationale for impact on search performance
   - Frequency of error in a particular population
   - Can’t tell
   - None of the above
3. Is this positive or negative evidence?
   o Positive (supports the importance of the element)
   o Negative (refutes the importance of the element)

4. The major impact discussed is: (check all that apply)
   □ Recall (sensitivity)
   □ Precision
   □ Specificity
   □ Cost/Time
   □ Peer reviewing
   □ Other (describe)
   □ Can’t tell
   □ None of the above

5. Summarize the evidence, noting page number after each statement. Place cut/paste in quotations please.

Evidence regarding Limits

6. This paper presents: (check all that apply)
   □ Research evidence regarding search performance
   □ Theoretical rationale for impact on search performance
   □ Frequency of error in a particular population
   □ Can’t tell
   □ None of the above

7. Is this positive or negative evidence?
   o Positive (supports the importance of the element)
   o Negative (refutes the importance of the element)

8. The major impact discussed is: (check all that apply)
   □ Recall (sensitivity)
   □ Precision
   □ Specificity
   □ Cost/Time
   □ Peer reviewing
   □ Other (describe)
   □ Can't tell
   □ None of the above
9. Summarize the evidence, noting page number after each statement. Place cut/paste in quotations please.

Evidence regarding Conceptualization

10. This paper presents: (check all that apply)
   - Research evidence regarding search performance
   - Theoretical rationale for impact on search performance
   - Frequency of error in a particular population
   - Can’t tell
   - None of the above

11. Is this positive or negative evidence?
   - Positive (supports the importance of the element)
   - Negative (refutes the importance of the element)

12. The major impact discussed is: (check all that apply)
   - Recall (sensitivity)
   - Precision
   - Specificity
   - Cost/Time
   - Peer reviewing
   - Other (describe)
   - Can't tell
   - None of the above

13. Summarize the evidence, noting page number after each statement. Place cut/paste in quotations please.

Evidence regarding other elements

14. This paper presents: (check all that apply)
   - Research evidence regarding search performance
   - Theoretical rationale for impact on search performance
   - Frequency of error in a particular population
   - Can’t tell
   - None of the above
15. Is this positive or negative evidence?
   o Positive (supports the importance of the element)
   o Negative (refutes the importance of the element)

16. The major impact discussed is: (check all that apply)
   □ Recall (sensitivity)
   □ Precision
   □ Specificity
   □ Cost/Time
   □ Peer reviewing
   □ Other (describe)
   □ Can't tell
   □ None (non specific)

17. Summarize the evidence, noting page number after each statement. Place cut/paste in quotations please.
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The project was initially referred to as EHTAS (Evaluating Health Technology Assessment Searches). The name of the project was changed to PRESS (Peer Review Electronic Search Strategy) early in 2006 after consultation with local and international advisors. It was decided that PRESS was less difficult to remember and spell and thus easier to use. However, EHTAS was in use at the time of the survey.

Consent form
Please read the following consent form and then answer at the bottom.

EHTAS (Evaluating Health Technology Assessment Searches). A project to develop a quality assessment checklist and an expert peer review forum for HTA searches.

Thank you for your interest in our research study to develop a quality assessment checklist for searches used in HTAs and systematic reviews and an expert forum to peer review these searches. The importance of the search quality in an HTA is to ensure an accurate and complete evidence base is used. A validated process for evaluating the quality and completeness of the evidence base for systematic reviews, including HTA reports, does not currently exist. The lack of such a process, paired with a demonstrable level of error in reported searches, leaves this type of research open to debate over the quality of evidence on which the review is based.

You are being asked to participate in a web-based survey to discuss your experiences in searching for systematic reviews. Participation is entirely voluntary. At any particular part of the survey, you may refuse to answer any particular question or stop the survey altogether.

You will never be personally identified as a participant in this study. General demographic information (e.g. respondents range in experience from 0-24 years) and generic descriptors (e.g. librarian, reviewer) will be used to describe study participants. Information will generally be presented in summary form, but some individual responses may be presented as part of the findings. Individual responses will be included as direct quotations, with no identifying information provided.

You may contact the Chair of the Ottawa Hospital Research Ethics Board for information regarding participants’ rights in research studies at 1-613-798-5555 ext.14902; however, this person cannot provide detailed information with regard to this study. For questions about this study, please feel free to contact at any time the Project Office at the Institute of Population Health at 1-613-562-5800 ext.2114, or either of the study investigators below.

Sincerely,

Jessie McGowan, Principal Investigator
I consent to take part in the program EHTAS (evaluating health technology assessment searches): a project to develop a quality assessment checklist and an expert peer review forum for HTA searches.

☐ YES

☐ NO

Name of participant:

Email Address of Participant:

Phone Number of Participant (optional):

Survey Instructions

Thank you for participating in our research study to develop a checklist for evaluating search strategies used in systematic reviews and HTAs. The goal of this research is to develop a peer reviewing tool to evaluate electronic search strategies and improve the quality of searches.

The survey asks you to assess the importance of various elements in a search strategy, to the best of your knowledge. Standard questions are asked for every element and there are 18 elements in total. The elements work from more conceptual problems to more concrete errors. Elements include conceptualization & organization, selections of terms, use of limits & fields, errors in spelling, truncation & operator use, and tailoring for different databases. Notice that we are not concerned here with the entire search plan, such as the selection of database and non-database sources. Note that you may go back to change an answer.
Participant Background Information (to be presented in aggregated form only to describe the survey sample).

What is your formal training/degree? (Pick all that apply)
   - MLIS
   - MD
   - MSc Epidemiology
   - PhD Epidemiology
   - Other (please specify)

How many years experience do you have in searching?

How many years experience do you have doing systematic reviews or health technology assessments?

How many SRs or HTAs have you been involved in?

What country are you responding from?
1. Is the search question translated well into search concepts?

**Definition:** The search includes the most important elements of the clinical question, with neither too few nor too many concepts introduced. Focus here on the broad concepts represented in the search strategy.

Score irrelevant terms in question #4 or #8 below. Score missing terms in question #3 or #6 below.

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
   - Compelling research evidence
   - Weak research evidence
   - Contradictory research evidence
   - Refuted by research evidence
   - No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
   - No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
   - Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

2. Is the search well organized?

**Definition:** The search strategy follows a clear sequence. Examples: All terms for the same concept are on consecutive lines, limits are placed at the end.

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree
d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?

- Compelling research evidence
- Weak research evidence
- Contradictory research evidence
- Refuted by research evidence
- No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
- No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
- Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

3. Are any important subject headings missing?

Note: Also score here the incorrect use of a term or phrase as a subject heading (even if the system’s mapping features would map it automatically to the correct subject heading). Example: “Anti-Bacterial Agents/” is the subject heading for antibiotics, but the OVID interface produces the same result with “exp Antibiotics/” as with “exp Anti-Bacterial Agents/”.

Note that all examples in the survey are using the OVID interface.

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:

- Nil
- Small
- Moderate
- Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:

- Nil
- Small
- Moderate
- Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?

- Compelling research evidence
- Weak research evidence
- Contradictory research evidence
- Refuted by research evidence
- No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
- No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
- Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
4. Are any irrelevant subject headings included?

**Definition:** The use of subject headings that are not relevant for the search.

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
- [ ] Nil
- [ ] Small
- [ ] Moderate
- [ ] Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
- [ ] Nil
- [ ] Small
- [ ] Moderate
- [ ] Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
- [ ] Strongly disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neutral
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
- [ ] Compelling research evidence
- [ ] Weak research evidence
- [ ] Contradictory research evidence
- [ ] Refuted by research evidence
- [ ] No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
- [ ] No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
- [ ] Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
- [ ] Strongly disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neutral
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly agree

5. Are any subject headings exploded even though no narrower terms exist?

**Definition:** The explosion of a subject heading when no narrower terms exist.

Example: 1. exp eyebrows/

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
- [ ] Nil
- [ ] Small
- [ ] Moderate
- [ ] Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
- [ ] Nil
- [ ] Small
- [ ] Moderate
- [ ] Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
- [ ] Strongly disagree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Neutral
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Strongly agree
d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
   - Compelling research evidence
   - Weak research evidence
   - Contradictory research evidence
   - Refuted by research evidence
   - No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
   - No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
   - Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

6. Are any natural language terms missing?
   **Definition:** Important synonyms are missing.
   Missing spelling variants are noted in question #7 below. Missing concepts are noted in question #1 above.

   a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
      - Nil
      - Small
      - Moderate
      - Large

   b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
      - Nil
      - Small
      - Moderate
      - Large

   c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
      - Strongly disagree
      - Disagree
      - Neutral
      - Agree
      - Strongly agree

   d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
      - Compelling research evidence
      - Weak research evidence
      - Contradictory research evidence
      - Refuted by research evidence
      - No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
      - No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
      - Not supported

   e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
      - Strongly disagree
      - Disagree
      - Neutral
      - Agree
      - Strongly agree

7. Are any spelling variants missing?
   **Definition:** The presentation of only one spelling of a word when other variants exist. Failing to truncate a term should be scored here. Missed synonyms are scored in question #6 above.
Examples of spelling variants are: haem$/hem$, paed$/ped$, ischem$/ischaem$.

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
   - Compelling research evidence
   - Weak research evidence
   - Contradictory research evidence
   - Refuted by research evidence
   - No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
   - No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
   - Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

8. Are any irrelevant natural language terms included?

Definition: The use of natural language terms that are not relevant for the search.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil    ☐ Small    ☐ Moderate    ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil    ☐ Small    ☐ Moderate    ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence
☐ Weak research evidence
☐ Contradictory research evidence
☐ Refuted by research evidence
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

9. **Are subject headings and natural language terms combined in the same line?**

**Definition:** The combination of subject headings & natural language terms in the same line.

This is correct to use in MEDLINE, but will not allow for re-running of the strategy in multiple databases, which is the norm in systematic reviews.
Example: 1. eye.tw,sh.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
- Nil
- Small
- Moderate
- Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
- Nil
- Small
- Moderate
- Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
- Compelling research evidence
- Weak research evidence
- Contradictory research evidence
- Refuted by research evidence
- No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
- No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
- Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

10. Should any additional fields be searched?
Examples: authors, journals, publication types, floating subheadings, CAS registry numbers, etc.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil     ☐ Small      ☐ Moderate      ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil     ☐ Small      ☐ Moderate      ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence
☐ Weak research evidence
☐ Contradictory research evidence
☐ Refuted by research evidence
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

11. Do any of the limits used seem unwarranted?

The following could be used to limit the search: publication types, methodological filters, languages, dates, check tags, subheadings, etc.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
   - Nil
   - Small
   - Moderate
   - Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
   - Compelling research evidence
   - Weak research evidence
   - Contradictory research evidence
   - Refuted by research evidence
   - No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
   - No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
   - Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

12. Are any potentially helpful limits missing?

Limits could be: publication types, methodological filters, languages, dates, check tags, subheadings, etc.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil  ☐ Small  ☐ Moderate  ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil  ☐ Small  ☐ Moderate  ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence  ☐ Weak research evidence  ☐ Contradictory research evidence  ☐ Refuted by research evidence  ☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion  ☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident  ☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

13. Does the search strategy have any spelling mistakes or system syntax errors?

**Definition:** A word that is misspelled or a search line that is presented in such a way that it won't run. Use for misspellings only. Missed spelling variants are scored in question #7 above.

Examples: the operator adj is spelled ajd - although the mistake is in a logical operator, it would be classified as a spelling mistake; entering example$.tx. instead of example$.tw.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil ☐ Small ☐ Moderate ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil ☐ Small ☐ Moderate ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence
☐ Weak research evidence
☐ Contradictory research evidence
☐ Refuted by research evidence
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

14. Are there any errors in truncation?

**Definition:** Typically truncating in the wrong place or inappropriate use of truncation. Note: Failure to truncate is scored as a missed spelling variant in question #7 above. Examples: Truncating after a plural (e.g., errors$) or truncating too soon in the word stem.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
- Nil
- Small
- Moderate
- Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
- Nil
- Small
- Moderate
- Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
- Compelling research evidence
- Weak research evidence
- Contradictory research evidence
- Refuted by research evidence
- No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
- No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
- Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

15. Are there any mistakes in the use of Boolean or proximity operators?

**Definition:** The inappropriate use of the logical operators (e.g., AND where OR was intended, NOT with potential unintended consequences).

Example:
1. exp eye/
2. eye.tw.
3. 1 NOT 2
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:

☐ Nil  ☐ Small  ☐ Moderate  ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:

☐ Nil  ☐ Small  ☐ Moderate  ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:

☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?

☐ Compelling research evidence  
☐ Weak research evidence  
☐ Contradictory research evidence  
☐ Refuted by research evidence  
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion  
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident  
☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:

☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

16. Is the wrong line number specified anywhere?

**Definition:** The wrong line number is specified.

**Example:**
1. exp eye/
2. eye.tw.
3. 1 or 4
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil ☐ Small ☐ Moderate ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil ☐ Small ☐ Moderate ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence
☐ Weak research evidence
☐ Contradictory research evidence
☐ Refuted by research evidence
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

17. Does the search include redundancies without a rationale?

**Definition:** The use of both a broader term and a narrower term, whether they are subject headings or natural language terms.

Example: Searching two versions of MEDLINE without giving a rationale is redundant.

Another example is:
1. esophag$.tw.
2. (esophag$ adj2 neoplas$).tw.
The second line is narrower than the first & can’t retrieve any additional material, so it is redundant.
a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil    ☐ Small    ☐ Moderate    ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil    ☐ Small    ☐ Moderate    ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree    ☐ Disagree    ☐ Neutral    ☐ Agree    ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence
☐ Weak research evidence
☐ Contradictory research evidence
☐ Refuted by research evidence
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree    ☐ Disagree    ☐ Neutral    ☐ Agree    ☐ Strongly agree

18. Has the search strategy been adapted for each database to be searched?

**Definition:** The use of a search strategy for databases with different indexing or search features, without any indication that the search strategy was tailored for other databases.

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil    ☐ Small    ☐ Moderate    ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil    ☐ Small    ☐ Moderate    ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree    ☐ Disagree    ☐ Neutral    ☐ Agree    ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence
☐ Weak research evidence
☐ Contradictory research evidence
☐ Refuted by research evidence
☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion
☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident
☐ Not supported
e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

19. Please describe other errors that should be considered.

Note: If you would like to suggest more than one other error, please email the details to us at jmccgowan@uottawa.ca

a) The potential negative impact of this element on recall is:
☐ Nil  ☐ Small  ☐ Moderate  ☐ Large

b) The potential negative impact of this element on precision is:
☐ Nil  ☐ Small  ☐ Moderate  ☐ Large

c) This element indicates that the searcher may be unfamiliar with aspects of searching such as thesaurus terms, database features or search mechanics:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

d) What is your impression of the level of evidence on the importance of this element?
☐ Compelling research evidence  ☐ Weak research evidence  ☐ Contradictory research evidence  ☐ Refuted by research evidence  ☐ No research evidence, but is supported by expert opinion  ☐ No research evidence, but the impact is self-evident  ☐ Not supported

e) This element is important to consider in reviewing a search strategy:
☐ Strongly disagree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Agree  ☐ Strongly agree

Thank you for your contribution

Thank you for your participation in this important step in developing an assessment tool for search strategies used in systematic reviews and health technology assessments.

The results of the survey will be presented at the 2005 Cochrane Colloquium and the International Evidence-Based Librarianship Conference.

The next steps will be to revise the assessment tool based on these survey results, then have experienced searchers validate the tool by rating a series of searches.

May we contact you with information on participating in the next step of evaluating several searches, to occur in November 2005?
☐ Yes
☐ No
Are you interested in acting as a peer reviewer when the search peer review forum is launched, in January 2006?

☐ Yes
☐ No
APPENDIX D: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF 26 SCALES IDENTIFIED


Jensen MF. Check it out! A checklist for evaluating the reporting of literature search methodology in HTAs and CPGs [poster]: Second Annual Meeting of the Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi); 2005 June 20-22; Rome.


One additional scale was identified, but at the request of the author, we have not listed it here.
APPENDIX E: EXCLUDED STUDIES GROUPED BY EXCLUSION REASON

Articles excluded after review of the full article are listed here. Additional references excluded on the basis of review of the bibliographic record are not shown (n=8899).

Not relevant to peer review of electronic search strategies


Anonymous. Developing the specialised register for the Cochrane Effective Practice and Organisation of Care review group (EPOC) [abstract]. Proceedings of the 6th International Cochrane Colloquium 1998; Abstr Workshops Sci Sess Int Cochrane Coll(87); Baltimore.


Badgett RG, Mulrow CD, Levy LS. Predictors of successful searches for medical evidence by clinicians. VA HSR&D Eighteenth Annual Meeting; 1999.


Borgman CL. All users of information retrieval systems are not created equal: an exploration into individual differences. Information Processing and Management 1989; 25(3):251.


Brazier H. Poorly executed and inadequately documented? An analysis of the literature searches on which systematic reviews are based. 2nd Symposium on Systematic Reviews: Beyond the Basics; 1999 Jan; Oxford (UK).


Joyce J. My way or the right way: A round-up of guidelines for searching "Hedging our Bets". 18th Annual Meeting of ISTAHC; 2002; Berlin.


McLellan F. 1966 and all that- when is a literature search done? Lancet 2001; 358(9282):646.


Oldroyd BK, Schroder JJ. Study of strategies used in online searching: 2. Positional Logic—an example of the importance of selecting the right Boolean operator. Online Rev 1982; 6(2):127-133.


Sampson M. Getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time. Perspectives on Natural Health Products. Ottawa: Chalmers Research Group for Natural Health Products Directorate, Health Canada; 2002.


Santesso N. Emphasis on the need for guidelines for documentation of search strategy and results was needed, criticism of a Cochrane review was not.[comment]. J Med Libr Assoc 2004; 92(4):393-394.

Saracevic T. Measuring the degree of agreement between searchers. Challenges to an information society proceedings of the Seventh ASIS annual meeting; 1984:230.


**Excluded because the document could not be obtained**


Kohler C, Wagner C. On the efficiency of different search strategies. ISLIC International Conference on Information Science; 1971 Aug 29-Sept 3; Tel Aviv.

APPENDIX F: SEARCHES ASSESSED IN PRESS PILOT


(1) lateral epicondyle pain.mp. [mp = ti, tc, sh, ab, it, kw, rw]
(2) lateral epicondylitis.mp.
(3) epicondylitis.mp.
(4) epicondyle pain.mp.
(5) tennis elbow.mp.
(6) elbow pain.mp.
(7) tendonitis
(8) 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7;
(9) acupuncture.mp.
(10) NSAID
(11) analgesics
(12) anti-inflammatory drug
(13) ultrasound
(14) treatments.mp
(15) 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13 or 14
(16) prognosis.mp.
(17) disease free survival.mp.
(18) randomized controlled trial.mp.
(19) placebo
(20) cohort study.mp.
(21) natural history.mp.
(22) 17 or 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22
(23) 8 and 15 and 22


The search strategy used in the development of this guideline was as follows:

exp pneumonia/ or exp pneumonia, aspiration/ or "pneumonia".mp. OR
exp respiratory tract infections/ or "respiratory tract infection".mp OR
exp cross infection/ or "cross infection".mp
AND
exp critical care/ or "critical care".mp. OR
exp intensive care units/ or "intensive care unit". mp
AND
exp clinical trials/ or exp randomized controlled trials/ or "controlled trials".mp.
AND
exp prospective studies/ or "prospective studies".mp

To increase the sensitivity of the search, we performed additional searches by using the terms mechanical ventilation, enteral nutrition, and nutrition instead of critical care and intensive care unit.

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Search strategy
Medline (1990 - 2002)

((("Neoplasms-'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or (cancer* in ab) or (tumor* in ab) or (tumour* in ab) or (malign* in ab) or (oncolog* in ab))

and ("Palliative-Care'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Terminal-Care'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Hospice-Care'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Terminally-Ill'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or (incurable in ab) or (incurable in ti) or (advanced in ab) or (advanced in ti) or (palliat* in ab) or (palliat* in ti) or (terminal* in ab) or (terminal* in ti))

and (explode 'Psychotherapy-'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Patient-Education'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Cognitive-Therapy'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or (explode 'Behavior- Therapy'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or (explode 'Adaptation-Psychological'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Counseling-/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or ('Social-Support'/all subheadings in MIME,MJME) or (psychosocial in ab) or (psychosocial in ti))

and (((Randomized- Controlled-Trial in pt) or (Controlled-Clinical-Trial in pt) or (randomized controlled trials in MIME,MJME) or (random allocation in MIME,MJME) or (double-blind method in MIME,MJME) or (single- blind method in MIME,MJME) or (Clinical-Trial in pt) or (clinical trials in MIME,MJME) or ('clinical trial') or ((singl* or doubl* or trebl* or tripl*) and (mask* or blind*)) or ('latin square') or (placebos in MIME,MJME) or placebo* or random* or (research design in MIME,MJME) or (comparative study in MIME,MJME) or (evaluation studies in MIME,MJME) or (follow-up studies in MIME,MJME) or (prospective studies in MIME,MJME) or (cross-over studies in MIME,MJME) or control* or prospective* or volunteer*))

not ((animal in MIME,MJME) not (human in MIME,MJME)))

Hits 328

Cinahl (1990 - 2002)
1. exp vitamins/ (151282)
2. vitamins$.tw. (66130)
3. micronutrients/ (416)
4. or/1-3 (170821)
5. exp trace elements/ (148034)
6. trace element$.tw. (5425)
7. exp antioxidants/ (61933)
8. antioxidant$.tw. (25297)
9. retinal.tw. (6447)
10. exp ascorbic acid/ (20047)
11. ascorbic acid.tw. (11170)
12. tocopherol$.tw. (8012)
13. menadione.tw. (1324)
14. menaquinone.tw. (483)
15. cobalt.tw. (9245)
16. copper.tw. (25369)
17. fluoride.tw. (17480)
18. fluorine.tw. (3529)
19. iodine.tw. (17022)
20. iron.tw. (52427)
21. manganese.tw. (8237)
22. zinc.tw. (33788)
23. selenium.tw. (9115)
24. molybdenum.tw. (2335)
25. chromium.tw. (6575)
26. silicon.tw. (6575)
27. exp minerals/ (51560)
28. mineral$.tw. (39718)
29. or/5-28 (366069)
30. eating/ (23360)
31. diatary supplements/ (3442)
32. food.tw. (86122)
33. food/ (12576)
34. or/30-33 (110404)
35. 29 and 34 (10098)
36. 4 or 35 (177226)
37. exp infection/(307738)
38. infection$.tw. (415904)
39. exp immunity/ (570166)
40. "allergy and immunology"/(2871)
41. im.fs. (785484)
42. (immune or immunity or immunology$).ti. (106979)
43. or/37-42 (1522096)
44. 36 and 43 (13338)
45. exp aged/ (1215692)
46. elderly.tw.(1215692)
47. old$. person$.tw. (3420)
48. old$ people$. tw. (5210)
49. or/45-48 (1226166)
50. 44 and 49 (997)
51. guideline.pt. (9980)
52. practice guideline.pt. (6066)
53. exp guidelines/ (27374)
54. health planning guidelines/ (876)
55. or/51-54 (37965)
56. meta-analysis/ (3999)
57. exp review literature/ (1350)
58. (meta-analy$ or meta analy$ or metaanaly$).tw (7483)
59. meta analysis.pt. (6071)
60. review academic.pt.(60389)
61. review literature.pt (26302)
62. letter.pt. (444983)
63. review of reported cases.pt. (43658)
64. historical article.pt. (193586)
65. review multicase.pt. (6620)
66. or/56-61
67. or 62-65
68. 66 not 67 (97252)
69. 55 or 68 (134197)
70. 50 and 69 (11)
71. limit 70 to (human and English language) (10)
72. randomised controlled trial.pt. (152463)
73. controlled clinical trial.pt. (59132)
74. randomised controlled trials/ (20675)
75. random allocation/ (44901)
76. double blind method/ (67074)
77. single blind method/ (6136)
78. clinical trial.pt. (321481)
79. (random$ adj5 trial$).tw.(47760)
80. or/72-79 (374582)
81. 50 and 80 (173)
82. limit 81 to (human and English language) (153)
83. exp epidemiologic studies/ (612374)
84. (case$ adj3 control$).tw.(34604)
85. epidemiolog$.ti.(49352)
86. or/83-85 (669165)
87. 50 and 86 (126)
88. limit 87 to (human and English language) (111)
89. from 71 keep 1-10 (10)
90. from 82 keep 1-153 (153)
91. from 88 keep 1-111 (111)

Search Strategy using database: CINAHL
1. exp vitamins/ (3253)
2. vitamin$.tw. (2044)
3. micronutrients/ (185)
4. or/1-3 (3960)
5. exp trace elements/ (1211)
6. trace element$. Tw. (67)
7. antioxidants/ (682)
8. antioxidant$.tw. (502)
9. retinal.tw. (125)
10. exp ascorbic acid/ (479)
11. ascorbic acid.tw. (94)
12. tocopherol$.tw. (102)
13. menadione.tw. (0)
14. menaquinone.tw. (2)
15. cobalt.tw. (21)
16. copper.tw. (163)
17. fluoride.tw. (276)
18. fluorine.tw. (10)
19. iodine.tw. (211)
20. iron.tw. (868)
21. manganese.tw. (29)
22. zinc.tw. (405)
23. selenium.tw. (115)
24. molybdenum.tw. (11)
25. chromium.tw. (60)
26. silicon.tw. (24)
27. exp minerals/ (526)
28. mineral$.tw. (955)
29. or/5-28 (4604)
30. eating/ (159)
31. dietary supplementation/ (2136)
32. food/ (1235)
33. food.tw. (4903)
34. or/ 30-33 (7704)
35. 29 and 34 (904)
36. exp infection/ (12508)
37. infection$.tw. (14150)
38. "allergy and immunology"/ (44)
39. im.fs. (244)
40. (immune or immunity or immunolog$).tw. (2613)
41. exp immunity/ (2068)
42. or/36-41 (24704)
43. 4 or 35 (4331)
44. exp aged/ (60050)
45. elderly.tw. (11728)
46. old$ person$.tw. (993)
47. old$ people$.tw. (1979)
48. or/44-47 (62151)
49. 43 and 42 (234)
50. 49 and 42 (40)
51. from 50 keep 1-40 (40)

Search strategy for database AMED (Allied and Complementary Medicine)
< 1985 to December 2001>
1. exp vitamins/ (1209)
2. vitamin$.tw. (1160)
3. micronutrients/ (6)
4. or/1-3 (1364)
5. exp trace elements/ (401)
6. trace element$. Tw. (138)
7. antioxidants/ (193)
8. antioxidant$. Tw. (363)
9. retinal.tw. (3)
10. exp ascorbic acid/ (162)
11. ascorbic acid.tw. (183)
12. tocopherol$.tw. (27)
13. menadione.tw. (3)
14. menaquinone.tw. (0)
15. cobalt.tw. (19)
16. copper.tw. (76)
17. fluoride.tw. (22)
18. fluorine.tw. (3)
19. iodine.tw. (32)
20. iron.tw. (90)
21. manganese.tw. (13)
22. zinc.tw. (127)
23. selenium.tw. (107)
24. molybdenum.tw. (7)
25. chromium.tw. (37)
26. silicon.tw. (12)
27. exp minerals/ (484)
28. mineral$.tw. (843)
29. or/5-28 (1795)
30. eating/ (57)
31. food/ (355)
32. food.tw. (1061)
33. exp diet/ (937)
34. or/30-33 (1893)
35. 29 and 34 (205)
36. 4 or 35 (1474)
37. exp aged/ (4323)
38. elderly.tw. (2352)
39. old$. person$. Tw. (238)
40. old$. people$. tw. (354)
41. or/37-40 (4991)
42. 36 and 41 (58)
43. exp infection/ (252)
44. infection$.tw. (1842)
45. exp immunity/ (331)
46. exp immune system/ (831)
47. (immunity or immune or immunology$). Tw. (1599)
48. or/43-47 (3510)
49. 42 and 48 (7)
50. from 49 keep 1-7 (7)

Search strategy by PREMEDLINE
1. (vitamin$ or mineral$ or trace element$ or micronutrient$).tw. (2079)
2. (immunity or immune or immunology$ or infection$).tw. 9918)
3. (elderly or old$ people$ or old person$).tw. (1394)
4. 1 and 2 and 3 (4)
5. from 4 keep 1-4 (4)

Search strategy - database: EBM reviews - ACP Journal club
<1991 to September/October 2001>

1. [exp vitamin/] (0)
2. vitamin$.tw. (91)
3. [micronutrients/] (0)
4. or/1-3 (91)
5. [exp trace elements/] (0)
6. trace element$. Tw. (3)
7. [antioxidants/] (0)
8. antioxidant$.tw (26)
9. retinal.tw. (5)
10. [exp ascorbic acid/] (0)
11. ascorbic acid.tw. (4)
12. tocopherol$.tw. (9)
13. menadione.tw. (0)
14. menaquinone.tw. (0)
15. cobalt.tw. (0)
16. copper.tw. (3)
17. fluoride.tw. (7)
18. fluorine.tw. (0)
19. iodine.tw. (14)
20. iron.tw. (21)
21. manganese.tw. (0)
22. zinc.tw. (11)
23. selenium.tw. (7)
24. molybdenum.tw. (0)
25. chromium.tw. (0)
26. silicon.tw. (0)
27. [exp minerals/] (0)
28. mineral$.tw. (40)
29. or/5-28 (111)
30. [eating/] (0)
31. [food/] (0)
32. food.tw. (95)
33. [exp diet/] (0)
34. or/30-33 (95)
35. 29 and 34 (14)
36. 4 or 35 (95)
37. [exp aged/] (0)
38. elderly.tw. (212)
39. old$ person$.tw. (42)
40. old$ people$.tw. (2)
41. or/37-40 (228)
42. 36 and 41 (14)
43. [exp infection/] (0)
44. infection$.tw. (364)
45. [exp immunity/] (0)
46. [exp immune system/] (0)
47. (immunity or immune or immunology$). Tw. (106)
48. or/43-47 (397)
49. 42 and 48 (2)
50. [from 49 keep 1-7] (0)
51. from 49 keep 1-2 (2)


1. RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL.pt.
2. CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL.pt.
3. RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIALS/
4. RANDOM ALLOCATION/
5. DOUBLE-BLIND METHOD/
6. SINGLE-BLIND METHOD/
7. OR/1-6
8. HUMAN.sh.
9. 7 AND 8
10. CLINICAL TRIAL.pt.
11. EXP CLINICAL TRIALS/
13. ((SINGL$ OR DOUBL$ OR TREBL$ OR TRIPL$) ADJ 3 (BLIND$ OR MASK$)). ti,ab.
14.PLACEBOS/
15. PLACEBOS.ti,ab.
16. RANDOM$.ti,ab.
17. RESEARCH DESIGN/
18. OR/9-17
19. COMPARATIVE STUDY.sh.
20. EXP EVALUATION STUDIES/
21. FOLLOW UP STUDIES.sh.
22. PROSPECTIVE STUDIES.sh.
23. (CONTROL$ OR PROSPECTIV$ OR VOLUNTEER$).ti,ab.
24. OR/18-23
25. LIMIT 24 TO HUMAN
26. STAPHYLOCOCCAL SKIN INFECTIONS/
27. IMPETIGO/
28. IMPETIGO.ti,ab.
29. PYODERMA.ti,ab.
30. OR/26-29
31. 30 and 25


1 osteoarthritis.tw,sh.
2 knee joint/
3 knee.tw,sh.
4 1 and (2 or 3)
5 osteoarthritis, knee/
6 4 or 5
7 exp osteoporosis/
8 osteoporos#.tw.
9 bone density/
10 bone desit$.tw.
11 bone mineral.tw.
12 osteopenia.tw.
13 bone loss$.tw.
14 or/7-11
15 Plus Cochrane study filter

1 RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL.pt.
2 CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIAL.pt.
3 RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIALS.sh.
4 RANDOM ALLOCATION.sh.
5 DOUBLE BLIND METHOD.sh.
6 SINGLE-BLIND METHOD.sh.
7 or/1-6
8 (ANIMAL 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$.ti,ab.
17 or/10-16
18 17 not 8
19 9 or 18
20 exp BRONCHITIS/
21 acute bronchit$.mp. [mp=title, abstract, cas registry/ec number word, mesh subject heading]
22 exp Respiratory Tract Infections/
23 or/20-22
24 exp ANTIBIOTICS, LACTAM/ or exp ANTIBIOTICS, COMBINED/ or exp ANTIBIOTICS, TETRACYCLINE/ or exp ANTIBIOTICS, AMINOGLYCOSIDE/ or exp ANTIBIOTICS, GLYCOPEPTIDE/ or exp ANTIBIOTICS, MACROLIDE/
25 19 and 23 and 24


1. DETERGENTS explode all trees (MeSH)
2. SALINE SOLUTION HYPERTONIC explode all trees (MeSH)
3. POVIDONE-IODINE explode all trees (MeSH)
4. CHLORHEXIDINE explode all trees (MeSH)
5. HYDROTHERAPY explode tree 1 (MeSH)
6. ANTI-INFECTIVE AGENTS LOCAL explode all trees (MeSH)
7. DISINFECTION explode all trees (MeSH)
8. ALCOHOL DETERGENTS explode all trees (MeSH)
9. (clean* or wash* or scrub*)
10. (wound* near cleaning)
11. (shower* or bath*)
12. (detergent* or saline or povidone or iodine or betadine)
13. (irrigat* or whirlpool)
14. (chlorhexidine or hibitane or water or alcohol)
15. ANTI-INFECTIVE AGENTS LOCAL explode all trees (MeSH)
16. DISINFECTION single term (MeSH)
17. antiseptic*
18. disinfectant*
19. solution*
20. soak*
21. SODIUM HYPOCHLORITE explode all trees (MeSH)
22. SOLUTIONS single term (MeSH)
23. hypochlorit*
24. eusol
25. dakin*
26. (potassium next permanganate)
27. (gentian next violet)
28. (hydrogen next peroxide)
29. (benzoyl next peroxide)
30. (#1 or #2 or #3 or #4 or #5 or #6 or #7 or #8 or #9 or #10 or #11)
31. (#12 or #13 or #14 or #15 or #16 or #17 or #18 or #19 or #20)
32. (#21 or #22 or #23 or #24 or #25 or #26 or #27 or #28 or #29)
33. (#30 or #31 or #32)
34. DECUBITUS ULCER explode all trees (MeSH)
35. (decubitus near ulcer*)
36. (bed near ulcer*)
37. (pressure near ulcer*)
38. (pressure near sore*)
39. (bed near sore*)
40. (#34 or #35 or #36 or #37 or #38 or #39)
41. (#33 and #40)


Pulmonary Emphysema!/de OR Emphysema!/de OR Emphysem?/ti,ab
AND
Surgery/de OR (Lung(volume)reduction(surgeon? OR LVRS OR Reduction(pneumoplast? OR Surge? OR pneumectomy? OR lung(reduction)surgeon?)/ti,ab OR (Pulmonary AND (surgery? OR resection? OR lobectomy?))/ti,ab OR (Lung(volume)reduction /ti,ab AND (surgery/de OR surgery/ti,ab OR surgeries/ti,ab))
AND
dt=(meta-analysis OR controlled clinical trial OR randomized controlled trial OR multicenter study OR clinical trial OR clinical trial, phase i OR clinical trial, phase ii OR clinical trial, phase iii OR clinical trial, phase iv OR review OR review, multicase) OR (clinical trials! OR comparative study OR epidemiologic research design! OR epidemiologic studies! OR evaluation studies OR random allocation)/de OR (random? OR controlled()trial? OR controlled()clinical()trial? OR double()blind? OR single()blind? OR treble()blind? OR open()label()stud? OR open()label()trial? OR retrospective stud? OR prospective()stud? OR sham OR meta()analy? OR metaanaly? OR meta-analysis OR cohort()stud? OR case()control()stud? OR epidemiologic()stud? OR research()integration OR review? OR research()overview? OR quantitative(review? OR quantitative()overview? OR research()overview? OR methodologic()review? OR methodologic()overview? OR systematic()overview? OR systematic()review? OR
A-53


S1 s (Skin Transplantation OR Skin(L)transplantation)/de

S2 s (Graft Rejection OR Graft Survival OR Transplantation Tolerance OR Transplants OR Transplantation OR Transplantation, Homologous! OR Transplantation, Heterologous!)/de AND (Skin!/de OR (skin OR dermi? OR derma? OR epidermi? OR epiderma? OR keratinocyte?)/ti,ab)

S3 s (transplant? OR graft? OR autograft? OR allograft?)(n)(skin OR dermi? OR derma? OR epidermi? OR epiderma? OR keratinocyte?)/ti,ab

S4 s s1:s3

S5 s (Artificial Organs OR Bioartificial Organs OR Prostheses and Implants OR Absorbable Implants OR Implants, Experimental OR Tissue Engineering OR Tissue Culture)/de

S6 s (artificial? OR bio()artificial OR bioartificial OR bio()engineer? OR bioengineer? OR culture? OR equivalent? OR living()cell()composite? OR man()made OR replac? OR substitut? OR synthetic? OR tissue()engineer?/ti,ab)

S7 s5:s6

S8 s s4 and s7

S9 s Skin, Artificial/de

S10 s (Apligraf OR Dermagraft OR Epicel OR Graftskin OR OrCel OR INTEGRA OR TransCyte OR Epibase)/ti,ab

S11 s artificial(n)skin/ti,ab

S12 s s9:s11

S13 s s8 or s12
S14 s Single-Blind Method/de OR Double-Blind Method/de OR Meta-Analysis/de OR Random Allocation/de

S15 s dt=(Clinical Trial, Phase I OR Clinical Trial, Phase II OR Clinical Trial, Phase III OR Clinical Trial, Phase IV)

S16 s dt=(Clinical Trial OR Controlled Clinical Trial OR Meta-Analysis OR Multicenter Study OR Randomized Controlled Trial)

S17 s (Controlled Clinical Trials! OR Clinical Trials! OR Epidemiologic Research Design! OR Research Design!)/de

S18 s (Comparative Study OR Placebos)/de


S20 s (triple()(blind? OR dumm? OR mask?) OR treble()(blind? OR dumm? OR mask?))/ti,ab

S21 s (placebo? OR meta()analy? OR metaanaly? OR quantitative?()(review? OR overview? OR synthesi?) OR integrative()research OR research()integration)/ti,ab

S22 s (systematic?()(review? OR overview?) OR methodologic?()(review? OR overview?))/ti,ab

S23 s (clinical()(trial? OR study OR studies) OR multicent?(2n)(trial? OR study OR studies) OR multi()cent?()(trial? OR study OR studies))/ti,ab

S24 s (control?()(study OR studies OR trial?) OR crossover()(design OR study OR trials?)/ti,ab

S25 s (comparative()(trial? OR study OR studies))/ti,ab

S26 s (head()”to”()head OR off()label? OR follow()up)/ti,ab

S27 s s14:s26

S28 s (Comparative Study OR Epidemiologic Studies! OR Evaluation Studies! OR Morbidity! OR Mortality! OR Prognosis!)/de
S29 s (natural()history OR inception()cohort OR predict? OR prognos? OR outcome)/ti,ab
S30 s (case(control?) OR (retrospective?) OR (cohort?) OR case(control()) OR cohort() OR (control?) OR study))/ti,ab OR (retrospective()) OR (cohort()) OR (control?) OR (study?))/ti,ab
S31 s (prospective?) OR (observational?) OR (follow()up()) OR (cohort?) OR (study?))/ti,ab
S32 s s28:s31
S33 s s13 AND s27
S34 S S33/HUMAN
S35 s s34/1980:2004
S36 rd s35
S37 s s13 AND s32
S38 S S37/HUMAN
S39 s s38/1980:2004
S40 rd s39

Database: CINAHL <1982 to February Week 1 2004>
Search Strategy:

1 Skin Transplantation/
2 Dermatoplasty.ti,ab.
3 Transplantation/ or Organ Transplantation/ or exp Grafts/
4 exp Skin/ or (skin or dermi$ or derma$ or epidermi$ or epiderma$ or keratinocyte$).mp.
5 3 and 4
6 ((transplant$ or graft$ or autograft$ or allograft$) adj (skin or dermi$ or derma$ or epidermi$ or epiderma$ or keratinocyte$)).mp.
7 or/1-2,5-6
8 Artificial Organs/ or "Prostheses and Implants"/ or Tissue Culture/
9 (artificial$ or (bio adj artificial) or bioartificial or (bio adj engineer$) or bioengineer$ or culture$ or equivalent$ or (living adj cell adj composite$) or (man adj made) or replac$ or substitut$ or synthetic$ or (tissue adj engineer$)).ti,ab.
10 (or/8-9) and 7
11 Skin, Artificial/
12 (Apligraf or Dermagraft or Epicel or Graftskin or Or Cel or INTEGRA or TransCyte
or Epibase).ti,ab.
13 (Artificial adj Skin).ti,ab.
14 or/11-13
15 10 or 14
16 exp Experimental Studies/ or Meta Analysis/ or exp Clinical Research/
17 Comparative Studies/ or Crossover Design/ or exp Professional Practice, Evidence-
Based/ or exp Nonexperimental Studies/
18 (Clinical trial or Systematic Review).pt.
19 (((random$ or RCT$ or single) adj (blind$ or dumm$ or mask$)) or (double adj (blind$ or dumm$ or mask$))).ti,ab.
20 ((triple adj (blind$ or dumm$ or mask$)) or (treble adj (blind$ or dumm$ or mask$))).ti,ab.
21 (placebo$ or (meta adj analy$) or metaanaly$ or (quantitative$ adj (review$ or overview$ or synthe$)) or (integrative adj research) or (research adj integration)).ti,ab.
22 ((systematic$ adj (review$ or overview$)) or (methodologic$ adj (review$ or overview$))).ti,ab.
23 ((clinical adj (trial$ or study or studies)) or (multicent$ adj2 (trial$ or study or studies)) or (multi adj cent$ adj (trial$ or study or studies))).ti,ab.
24 ((control$ adj (study or studies or trial$)) or (crossover adj (design or study or studies or trial$))).ti,ab.
25 (comparative adj (trial$ or study or studies)).ti,ab.
26 ((head adj2 head) or (off adj label$) or (follow adj up)).ti,ab.
27 Review.pt.
28 exp Morbidity/ or Mortality/ or Prognosis/ or Treatment Outcomes/
29 ((natural adj history) or (inception adj cohort) or predict$ or prognos$ or outcome).ti,ab.
30 ((case adj control adj (stud$ or trial$)) or (retrospective adj (stud$ or trial$)) or (cohort adj (stud$ or trial$))).ti,ab.
31 ((prospective adj (stud$ or trial$)) or (observational adj (stud$ or trial$)) or (follow adj up adj (stud$ or trial$))).ti,ab.
32 or/16-31
33 15 and 32
34 from 33 keep 1-127
# APPENDIX G: PRESS CHECKLIST

## PRESS Checklist

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Translation:</td>
<td>Is the search question translated well into search concepts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs revision Provide an explanation or example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Operators:</td>
<td>Are there any mistakes in the use of Boolean or proximity operators?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs revision Provide an explanation or example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Subject headings:</td>
<td>Are any important subject headings missing or have any irrelevant ones been included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs revision Provide an explanation or example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Natural language:</td>
<td>Are any natural language terms or spelling variants missing, or have any irrelevant ones been included? Is truncation used optimally?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs revision Provide an explanation or example</td>
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<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Spelling &amp; syntax:</strong></td>
<td>Does the search strategy have any spelling mistakes, system syntax errors, or wrong line numbers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Needs revision</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Limits:</strong></td>
<td>Do any of the limits used seem unwarranted or are any potentially helpful limits missing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Needs revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>Adapted for db:</strong></td>
<td>Has the search strategy been adapted for each database to be searched?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Needs revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H: SCREENSHOTS OF THE PEER REVIEW FORUM