Is surgery more effective than non-surgical treatment for spinal stenosis and which non-surgical treatment is more effective? a systematic review

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Figure 1. Flow diagram of selection process of studies

Potentially relevant citations after electronic and hand search and reference checking (n= 653).
First screening of abstracts by 2 reviewers

Second screening of abstracts by 2 reviewers (n = 141)

Third screening of full articles – consensus meeting (n = 43)

Full and relevant articles entered for review: N = 31

512 abstracts excluded as clearly not relevant

103 abstracts excluded: 34 – reviews / SR
36 – cohort / non-RCTs
14 - case studies
14 - other*

Reference lists checked:
24 articles - none appropriate

12 articles excluded: 7 – non-RCT
2 – secondary analysis
1 – physiological study
2 – patients mostly DH

* = survey of practice, imaging studies, prognosis, recommendations, technical study etc
DH = patients with disc herniation