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

- 512 abstracts excluded as clearly not relevant

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

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

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

- Reference lists checked:
  - 24 articles - none appropriate

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

Full and relevant articles entered for review: N = 31

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