**Appendix 1: Search methods for identification of studies**

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| Database: Ovid MEDLINE(R) <1950 to November Week 3 2010>  Search Strategy: | | |
| 1 | exp Analgesia, Obstetrical/ | 2779 |
| 2 | exp Anesthesia, Obstetrical/ | 10859 |
| 3 | exp Labor, Obstetric/ | 37319 |
| 4 | exp Labor Pain/ | 408 |
| 5 | (lab\*r adj10 analges$).mp. | 3043 |
| 6 | (lab\*r adj10 pain).mp. | 2352 |
| 7 | or/1-6 | 49095 |
| 8 | remifentan\*l.mp. | 2232 |
| 9 | exp piperidines/ | 106619 |
| 10 | 8 or 9 | 107019 |
| 11 | Exp Meperidine/ | 5064 |
| 12 | pethidine.mp | 1867 |
| 13 | 11 or 12 | 5721 |
| 14 | randomized controlled trial.pt. | 307057 |
| 15 | controlled clinical trial.pt. | 83492 |
| 16 | randomized.ab. | 211386 |
| 17 | placebo.ab. | 124882 |
| 18 | clinical trials as topic/ | 153231 |
| 19 | randomly.ab. | 154072 |
| 20 | trial.ti. | 91538 |
| 21 | or/14-20 | 710393 |
| 22 | 7 and 10 and 13 and 21 | 181 |

<Date searched 27 November 2010>

|  |  |  |
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| Database: Maternity and Infant Care <1971 to October 2010> Search Strategy: | | |
| 1 | Anaesthesia – obstetrical.de | 255 |
| 2 | Analgesia – obstetrical.de | 221 |
| 3 | (lab\*r adj10 analges$).mp. | 1365 |
| 4 | (lab\*r adj10 pain).mp. | 1644 |
| 5 | or/1-4 | 2681 |
| 6 | remifentan\*l.mp | 37 |
| 7 | Remifentanil.de | 16 |
| 8 | 6 or 7 | 37 |
| 9 | meperidine.de | 95 |
| 10 | pethidine.mp | 187 |
| 11 | 9 or 10 | 221 |
| 12 | 5 and 8 and 11 | 7 |

<Date searched 27 November 2010>

|  |  |  |
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| Database: EMBASE <1980 to 2010 Week 46> Search Strategy: | | |
| 1 | exp obstetric analgesia/ | 2726 |
| 2 | exp obstetric anesthesia/ | 11057 |
| 3 | exp Labor, Obstetric/ | 29030 |
| 4 | exp Labor Pain/ | 1176 |
| 5 | (lab\*r adj10 analges$).mp. | 4498 |
| 6 | (lab\*r adj10 pain).mp. | 3380 |
| 7 | or/1-6 | 39614 |
| 8 | remifentan\*l.mp. | 5658 |
| 9 | exp remifentanil/ | 5509 |
| 10 | 8 or 9 | 5658 |
| 11 | exp pethidine/ | 16507 |
| 12 | meperidine.mp | 2649 |
| 13 | 11 or 12 | 16836 |
| 14 | 7 and 10 and 13 | 73 |

<Date searched 27 November 2010>

|  |  |  |
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| Database: Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) <1982 to November 2010>  Search Strategy: | | |
| 1 | (MH “Labor Pain”) | 1034 |
| 2 | (MH "Analgesia, Obstetrical") | 523 |
| 3 | (MH "Anesthesia, Obstetrical") | 452 |
| 4 | 1 o 2 or 3 | 1753 |
| 5 | remifentan\*l | 174 |
| 6 | Pethidine | 85 |
| 7 | Meperidine | 477 |
| 8 | (MH “Meperidine”) | 380 |
| 9 | 6 or 7 or 8 | 515 |
| 10 | 4 and 5 and 9 | 1 |

<Date searched 27 November 2010>

|  |  |  |
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| Database: EBM Reviews - Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials <4th Quarter 2010> Search Strategy: | | |
| 1 | exp Analgesia, Obstetrical/ | 682 |
| 2 | exp Anesthesia, Obstetrical/ | 978 |
| 3 | exp Labor, Obstetric/ | 1557 |
| 4 | exp Labor Pain/ | 61 |
| 5 | (lab\*r adj10 analges$).mp. | 1335 |
| 6 | (lab\*r adj10 pain).mp. | 634 |
| 7 | or/1-6 | 3651 |
| 8 | remifentan\*l.mp. | 1138 |
| 9 | exp piperidines/ | 13144 |
| 10 | 8 or 9 | 13585 |
| 11 | exp Meperidine/ | 966 |
| 12 | pethidine.mp | 1038 |
| 13 | 11 or 12 | 1620 |
| 14 | randomized controlled trial.pt. | 284694 |
| 15 | controlled clinical trial.pt. | 79466 |
| 16 | randomized.ab. | 147977 |
| 17 | placebo.ab. | 100112 |
| 18 | clinical trials as topic/ | 32866 |
| 19 | randomly.ab. | 76867 |
| 20 | trial.ti. | 85968 |
| 21 | or/14-20 | 433014 |
| 22 | 7 and 10 and 13 and 21 | 152 |

<Date searched 27 November 2010>