

Potential relevant published articles

identified: (n=131)

84 excluded for the following reasons: review articles/meta-analysis/comments and editorials/ Letter to editor/ case reports/

Articles retrieved for more detailed

evaluation: (n=47)

25 excluded for the following reasons:
Not a randomized controlled study (n=3)
Evaluating in animal experiments (n=13)
Pediatric study (n=9)

Articles meeting inclusion criteria for this

meta-analysis: (n=22)

10 excluded for the following reason:
Not relevant to the main outcome (n=5)
Population not critically ill (n=3)
Inappropriate control group (n=2)

Articles included in this meta-analysis: **12**