1199 meta-analyses Medline search 1950 to May 2009 (exp Hypertension/(181,231) OR exp Blood Pressure/(216,603) OR (blood pressure or hyperten* or systolic or diastolic).mp. (538,084); limited to humans AND adults AND to meta-analysis OR reviews OR systematic reviews. All abstracts reviewed.

1161 excluded because were not meta-analyses, were of insufficient duration, did not address adult patients, or were derivative analyses of earlier meta-analyses with no new trials.

38 meta-analyses or systematic reviews reported trials that satisfied our inclusion criteria (see supplementary material for references) and were reviewed. These identified 197 trials of at least six months of any anti-hypertensive pharmacologic treatment for primary or secondary prevention. All 197 trials were reviewed.

134 met exclusion criteria (i) to(v)

15 excluded because did not report by-arm baseline or on-trial blood pressure or by-arm number of events for fatal and non-fatal stroke.

9 trials excluded because fewer than five cerebrovascular (CVA) events per arm

21 excluded because control arm was mandatory active antihypertensive drug(s)

18 trials met all criteria and were included in the statistical model

Figure 1. Flow chart of articles (also see Table 1 and Supplementary Material 2)