Records identified by prior search
MEDLINE/Premedline (Ovid) 227
EMBASE 293
Cochrane Library 48
CINAHL 178
ISI Web of Science (WOS) 57
(n = 803)

Records identified by focused search (stroke in title/keyword)
MEDLINE/Premedline (Ovid) 173
EMBASE 144
CINAHL 148
ISI Web of Science (WOS) 27
(n = 492)

Additional records identified through other sources
(n = 0)

Records after duplicates removed
(n = 538)

Records excluded:
Wrong topic (n = 334)

Records identified by title and abstract screening
(n = 204)

Records excluded:
No acute stroke at baseline (n = 174)

Full-text articles assessed for eligibility
(n = 30)

Full-text articles excluded:
Cross-sectional study (n = 10)
Clinical trial (n = 3)
Study protocol (n = 2)
Repeated measure (n = 2)
Case report (n = 1)
Fulltext not available (n = 1)

Citations included in quantitative synthesis & meta-analysis
(n = 11)