Appendix S1: search strategy (updated until January 2012).

**PubMed/MEDLINE:**

(“Clinical Trials as topic” [MeSH Terms] OR “Randomized Controlled Trials as Topic” [MeSH Terms] OR random* OR trial) AND (TEP OR TEP OR (total* AND extraperitoneal*) OR lichten* OR *liechten* OR laparosc* OR “Laparoscopy” [MeSH Terms] OR preperitoneal* OR (endosc* AND (inguinal hernia OR “Hernia, Inguinal” [MeSH Terms])))

*Full spelling of terms used in the search:* randomized controlled trial, totally extraperitoneal, extra peritoneal, Lichtenstein, Liechtenstein, laparoscopy, laparoscopic, preperitoneal, endoscopic, inguinal hernia

**CENTRAL (Wiley):**

(inguinal hernia or groin hernia) in Title, Abstract, Keywords, OR Hernia, Inguinal in MeSH descriptor in Trials in the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (http://www.thecochranelibrary.com).

**EMBASE (OvidSP):**

1 tep.mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: totally extraperitoneal
2 tepp.mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: totally extraperitoneal
3 (total* and (extraperitoneal* or extra peritoneal*)).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: totally extraperitoneal, extra peritoneal
4 (lichtenst* or liechtenst*).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: Lichtenstein, Liechtenstein
5 laparosc*.mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: laparoscopy, laparoscopic
6 (pre peritoneal or preperitoneal*).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: pre peritoneal, preperitoneal
7 (endosc* and inguinal hernia).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: endoscopic, endoscopy, inguinal, hernia
8 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7
9 (random* and trial).mp. [mp=title, abstract, subject headings, heading word, drug trade name, original title, device manufacturer, drug manufacturer, device trade name, keyword]  
   with terms: randomised, randomized, trial, trials
10 8 and 9