

Supplementary Files

Supplementary Table S1. Search strategy for each database. (20221219)

Database	Order	Keywords	Results
PubMed	#1	(((((median[Title]) OR (midline[Title])) OR (para-median[Title])) OR (paramedian[Title])) OR (lateral[Title]))	83576
	#2	(((((spinal[Title]) OR (intrathecal[Title])) OR (intra-the-cal[Title])) OR (sub-arachnoid[Title])) OR (subarachnoid[Title]))	167198
	#3	((anesthesia[Title]) OR (anaesthesia[Title])) OR (block[Title])	153241
	#4	#1 AND #2	1506
	#5	#3 AND #4	99
EMBASE	#1	median:ti OR midline:ti OR 'para median':ti OR paramedian:ti OR lateral:ti	97514
	#2	spinal:ti OR intrathecal:ti OR 'intra thecal':ti OR 'sub arachnoid':ti OR subarachnoid:ti	206120
	#3	anesthesia:ti OR anaesthesia:ti OR block:ti	185487
	#4	#1 AND #2	1761
	#5	#3 AND #4	124
CENTRAL	#1	(median):ti OR (midline):ti OR (para-median):ti OR (paramedian):ti OR (lateral):ti	5264
	#2	(spinal):ti OR (intrathecal):ti OR (intra-the-cal):ti OR (subarachnoid):ti OR (sub-arachnoid):ti	17373
	#3	(anesthesia):ti OR (anaesthesia):ti OR (block):ti	38331
	#4	#1 AND #2	181
	#5	#3 AND #4	130
SCOPUS	#1	(TITLE (median) OR TITLE (midline) OR TITLE (para-median) OR TITLE (paramedian) OR TITLE (lateral))	139599
	#2	(TITLE (spinal) OR TITLE (intrathecal) OR TITLE (intra-the-cal) OR TITLE (subarachnoid) OR TITLE (sub-arachnoid))	191984
	#3	(TITLE (anesthesia) OR TITLE (anaesthesia) OR TITLE (block))	305141
	#4	#1 AND #2	1635
	#5	#3 AND #4	117
Web of Science	#1	median (Title) or midline (Title) or para-median (Title) or paramedian (Title) or lateral (Title)	124197
	#2	spinal (Title) or intrathecal (Title) or intra-the-cal (Title) or subarachnoid (Title) or sub-arachnoid (Title)	180611
	#3	anesthesia (Title) or anaesthesia (Title) or block (Title)	284865
	#4	#1 AND #2	1566
	#5	#3 AND #4	94

Supplementary Table S2 Level of Certainty for each outcome

No. of studies	Study design	Risk of bias	Certainty assessment				No. of patients		Effect		Certainty
			Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Paramedian approach	Median approach	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)	
10	randomised trials	not serious	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	52/878 (5.9%)	93/878 (10.6%)	OR 0.43 (0.22 to 0.83)	57 fewer per 1,000 (from 81 fewer to 15 fewer)	⊕⊕⊕⊕ High
6	randomised trials	not serious	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	63/300 (21.0%)	126/300 (42.0%)	OR 0.27 (0.16 to 0.44)	256 fewer per 1,000 (from 316 fewer to 178 fewer)	⊕⊕⊕⊕ High
7	randomised trials	serious	not serious	not serious	not serious	none	391/445 (87.9%)	365/463 (78.8%)	OR 2.30 (1.36 to 3.87)	107 more per 1,000 (from 47 more to 147 more)	⊕⊕⊕○ Moderate

The level of evidence was assessed by the GRADE method, from very low ⊕⊕⊕⊕ to high ⊕⊕⊕⊕. No.: number; CI: confidence interval; OR: odds ratio.