**PAPER NUMBER #361**

**Which** **information should be included in characteristics table in meta-analyses of surgery？**

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**Objectives/aim**

To consider information included in characteristics table in meta-analyses has become increasingly important.As an indispensable part of meta-analysis, the characteristics table should provide some significant information. However, the information in the characteristics table of many articles are incomplete or insignificant, this makes it difficult to assess potential bias of the meta-analysis. To investigate information included in characteristics table in meta-analyses of surgery, take robotic surgery as an example.

**Methods**

PubMed, EMBASE, Cochrane Library and China Biology Medicine disc were systematically researched from their inception to Feburary 2018. We selected meta-analysis as to robotic surgery and investigated the information included in characteristics tables, and data of the reporting characteristics was summarized as frequency and percentage.

**Main findings**

90 studies met the inclusion criteria. There were significant differences among

the included characteristics tables, the reporting of the information was as follows: first author (44,48.35%); publish year (42,46.15%); country (65,71.43%); study type (67,73.63%); group (22,24.18%); study period (14,15.38%); number of patient(70,76.2%); age (61,67.03%); gender (40,43.96%); BMI (36,39.56%); tumor size (12,13.19%); type of robot (5,5.49%); operative time (7,7.69%); PSA (4,4.40%); blood loss (4,4.40%); hospital stay (3,3.30%); follow up time (15,16.48%); level of evidence (8,8.79%); outcomes (18,19.78%); quality score (20,21.98%). It is obvious that some information in the characteristics tables of many articles were incomplete, for example, follow up time was significant for evaluating the safety and efficacy of surgery, but only 16.67% reported it.

Conclusions**:** Information included in characteristics table in meta-analyses of surgery was insufficient and inconsistent. The researchers should provide basic information related to the research subject based on the Cochrane Handbook and AMSTAR guidance.