**Supplementary Online material**. Literature search strings

MEDLINE® through PubMed

(("Pleural diseases" [MeSH Terms] OR "Pleural Effusion" [MeSH Terms] OR "Empyema, Pleural" [MeSH Terms] OR "pleural effusion" [tiab]) AND (("Chest Tubes" [MeSH Terms] OR "Drainage" [MeSH Terms] OR "Catheters" [MeSH Terms]) AND ("small-bore" [tiab] OR "large-bore" [tiab] OR “tube size [tiab])) AND "Humans" [MeSH Terms]) NOT "Case Reports"[pt] NOT "Review"[pt]

EMBASE®

'pleura disease'/exp OR 'pleura effusion'/exp OR 'pleura empyema'/exp AND (('chest tube'/exp OR 'drainage'/exp OR drainage OR 'catheter'/exp) AND ('small bore':ab,ti OR 'large bore':ab,ti)) AND 'human'/de NOT 'case report'/de NOT 'meta analysis'/de NOT 'review'/it NOT 'systematic review'/de NOT 'network meta-analysis'/de