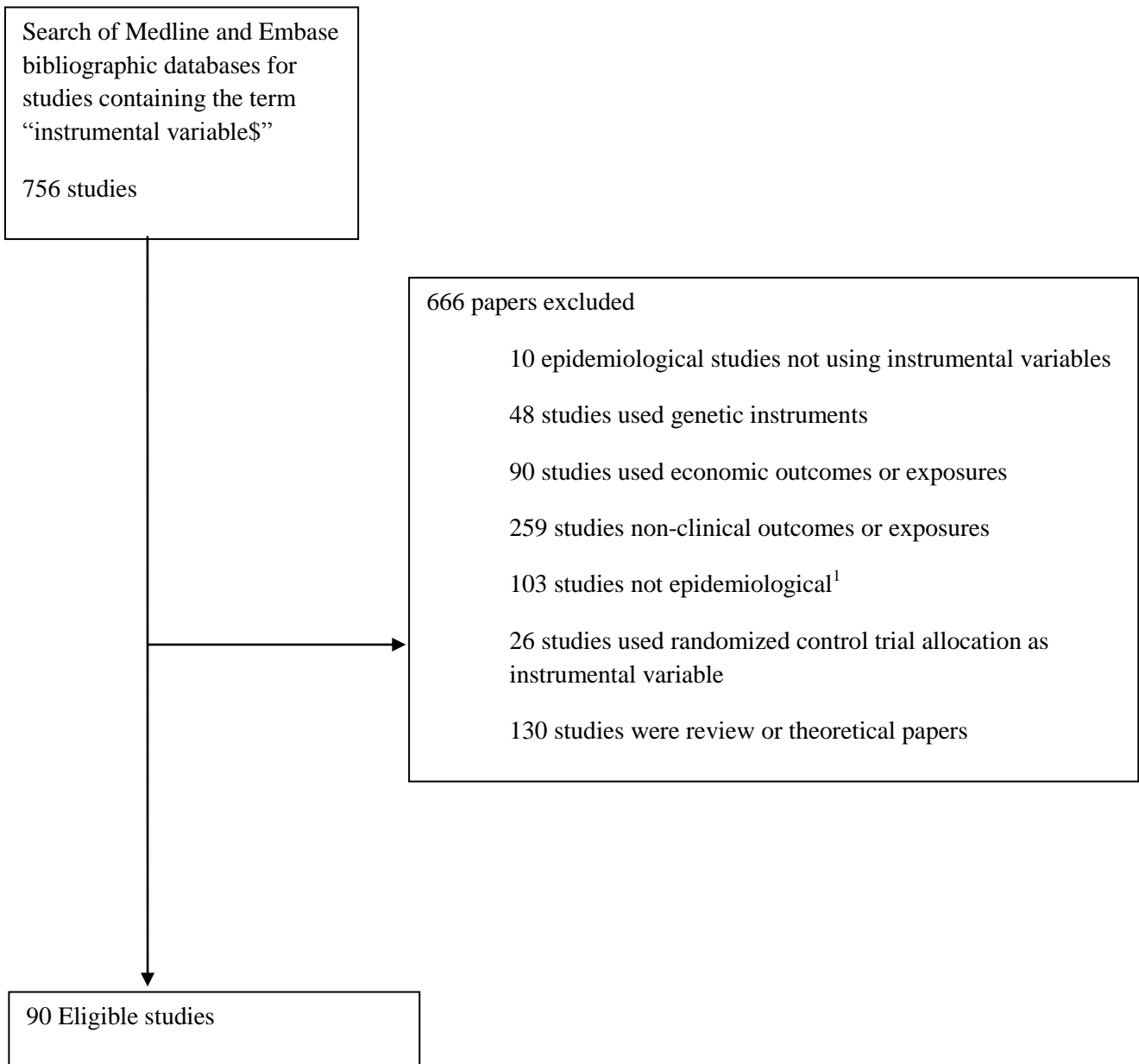


eFigure: Flow chart showing the selection and exclusion of studies



¹Studies that were not epidemiological were from a range of other fields including chemistry and biology, and generally used instrumental variables to refer to specific scientific processes.

eTable 1: Journals publishing 90 instrumental variable studies

	N. of studies
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General Medical Journals:	
Journal of American Medical Association	6
The New England Journal of Medicine	2
British Medical Journal	1
Economics and Health Services Research:	
Health Services Research	5
Value in Health	3
Health Economics	2
Health Services and Outcomes Research Methodology	2
Other health economics journals	3
Epidemiology journals:	
Journal of Clinical Epidemiology	2
American Journal of Epidemiology	4
Epidemiology	1
Specialist medical journals:	
American Heart Journal	2
American Journal of Kidney Diseases	2
Circulation	2
Journal of the American Geriatrics Society	2
Journal of the National Cancer Institute	2
Journal of the American Society of Nephrology	2
Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety	3
Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation	2
Other journals	42
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eTable 2: Type of exposure in 90 instrumental variable studies

Type of exposure	Number
Surgical	of studies
Breast conserving surgery	3
Catheterization	7
Time to treatment	3
Prostatectomy	1
Cystectomy	1
Tracheotomy timing	1
Colonoscopy	1
Partial vs. radical nephrectomy	1
Operations on vertebral Fractures	1
Pharmacological:	
Drug-Eluting Stents	2
Type of antipsychotic	6
Type of NSAID	3
Vitamin D supplements	1
Rosiglitazone	1
Statins	4
HAART	2
Hormone replacement therapy	1
Influenza vaccination	2
EPO doses	1
Corticosteroid dose	1
Chemotherapy	4
Aprotinin	1
Antibiotics	1
Bivalirudin	1
Dialyzer reuse	1
Vitamin K antagonist therapy	1
Phototherapy for newborns	1
Adherence to treatment	1
Androgen deprivation therapy	1
Anti-depressants	2
length of dialysis	1
long term control therapy	1
Phosphate binder	1
Other	30