



The Savvy Practitioner

A bulletin for practitioners and teachers of evidence-informed practice.

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Target audience this issue:

- ✓ *Classroom faculty*
- ✓ *Clinicians*
- ✓ *Teaching tips for EIP core instructors*

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Searching PubMed: Part 2

The basic steps of evidence informed practice are to ask, acquire, appraise, apply and appraise. Acquire is the process of searching the literature to find the answer to the question one has formulated in a PICO.

Generally, when searching for the best available clinical evidence one will want to use PubMed. To clarify Medline is a subset of PubMed and rarely does one actually choose to do a MedLine search specifically. However, for certain pre-established reasons one can limit a PubMed search to only Medline. The difference is that PubMed is more inclusive (containing all of MedLine, Pre-MedLine (not yet indexed citations destined for MedLine) and other citations from publishers, such as BioMedCentral, popular magazines and textbooks

Boolean Logic

Boolean logic for many may be just a bad memory from grade school but are invaluable tools when searching PubMed. PubMed uses three Boolean operators (always in caps): AND, OR, NOT. AND is not the arithmetic and (addition) but instead only retrieves results that include all the search terms. Thus complementary AND alternative will only find citations with both words. OR retrieves results that include at least one of the search terms. Complimentary OR alternative will find citations with either word. Infrequently used but quite a valuable time saver is NOT which excludes the term after the NOT. Complimentary NOT alternative is useful when one has already read the records associated with alternative and doesn't want to be redundant when now searching for alternative. It is also useful when one sees repeatedly a concept one doesn't want in a search, using NOT and it will no longer appear in one's search results. NB: if one is using field tags one must use Boolean operators with multiple search terms.

Field Tags

Field tags allows one to perform a search on a specific field (category) of a citations' PubMed record. For example, one search for a word that one knows is in the title of a paper. Kruger and Dunning's seminal paper on metacognition can be easily found by searching for unaware [TI] AND unskilled [TI] (TI is the abbreviation for title). Other commonly useful tags are:

[AU] - author

[MH] - MeSH

[MJ] - Major MeSH

[AD] - author's affiliation for example the university they work

[AB] - abstract

[TA] - journal

[date] - date of publication (could be just a year).

Help your students understand how best to find clinical research evidence.

For more help on MeSH, see:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK3827/>

**Want to know more?
Want handouts for
your students?**

Consult the Educator's Exchange!

Click through the following **webpages**: [EIP Resources](#) > [Information Literacy](#) > [Data Bases](#) and **download more pdfs and videos.**

Lost your link to the Educator's Exchange?

Try <http://bit.ly/CEIPE>.

You will need your password and user name.

Truncating search terms (wildcards)

When one wants to search for variations of a word (sport, sports, sportsmen, sportswoman) the asterisks can be used as a wildcard. Thus sport* would find all the variations above.

Using one paper to find similar ones

If one has found a paper that seems to fit ones PICO, one can find other similar papers a couple of ways. One can click on the link below the citation that says "Similar articles." If one has clicked on the one paper, similar articles will appear on the right side of the screen and one has the option of choosing to look at reviews by clicking "See reviews..."

If a citation has been indexed (it takes up to a year for the MeSH terms to a record MeSH terms in paper's record) one can click on "Publication Types, MeSH Terms" below the abstract and then clicking on any of the MeSH terms one has the option of searching using that term or going to find that MeSH term in the MeSH database. The final option is to create a search with that term and one could add others from that paper.

Single citation matcher

Sometimes one has a paper in mind and wants to use that as an entry point to searching. Clicking on "Single Citation Matcher" lets one easily find the PubMed record for the paper one has in mind. Any portion of the citation can be entered into the fields. The system will try to autocomplete the journal and the author names. Keep in mind that for most journals, entering just the journal name, the year (or volume) and the starting page number are all that are needed to find a unique paper.

Clinical Queries

Clicking on the Clinical Queries link leads one to a page where when one clicks on search three different of searches are performed. They are Clinical Study Categories, Systematic Reviews and Medical genetics. Clinical Study Categories allows one to choose Etiology, Diagnosis, Therapy, Prognosis and Clinical prediction guides. These limit the search to their respective category. One further has the choice to make the search "broad" or "narrow". A broad search will find more papers on the topic but also more unwanted ones. The narrow search will find fewer unrelated papers but also fewer appropriate ones. The Medical Genetics search offers the following options: Diagnosis, Differential Diagnosis, Clinical Description, Management, Genetic Counseling, Molecular Genetics, Genetic Testing. Keep in mind that one can cut and paste a search formulated in the MeSH dictionary.

2017 Evidence-Informed PIE Conference!
(July 13-15, 2017 at Northwestern Health Sciences University)



Twenty travel stipends ranging between \$500-\$1000 are available. They will be granted on a competitive basis. Deadline for submission is March 24. For more information, go to:

<http://www.ciheducatorsforeip.org>