Database Coverage

PubMed is a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine that includes over 18 million citations from MEDLINE and other life science journals for biomedical articles back to the 1948. PubMed includes links to full text articles and other related resources.

Starting the Program

Open Netscape or Internet Explorer. Type in the url or address http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/library
Select the PubMed hyperlink. This is a customized hyperlink with special features. Always use this version!

Searching

Enter search terms in the search box. The hyperlinks directly above the search box provide access to additional search options. The PubMed Search box and hyperlinks are available from
every screen. You do not need to return to the homepage to enter a new search. Once you click Search, PubMed will display your search results. The search box displays your search terms as you entered them.

Example: You are asked to obtain information on public health. Type this phrase into the search box.

1. Press the Search button.
2. You will retrieve millions of article descriptions but they are not very relevant to what you need.

Click the Limits tab from the Features bar to limit your search to a specific age group, gender, or humans or animals studies. Limits can also restrict to articles published in a specific language, and to specific types of articles such as review articles. Publication types include letter Meta-Analysis, Clinical Trial, Practice Guidelines and others. You can limit by Publication Date.

3. Add the Limits of English, Humans, the last 5 Years (2005-2010), and limit the tag field to title.
   Note: If the words are in the title the article is usually more relevant.
Let's narrow the results by adding the word informatics to the search box.

Interpretation of PUBMED Records

Eldredge JD, Carr RD [author]

Public health informatics training in New Mexico [article title]


PubMed PMID: 17641772 [PMID=unique identifier assigned to this record]

PubMed Central PMCID:PMC1924958.

Displaying and Access

PubMed citations are initially displayed in a summary format. Documents can be viewed in one of five other formats: Summary (default), Summary (Text), Abstract, Abstract (Text), XML, MEDLINE and PMID Lists. This handout focuses on summary, abstract, and citation. If you switch the display by clicking on the display settings handout to abstract, then you can determine if West Virginia University (WVU) has access to the journal.

Selecting this icon will let you know what years are available in the WVU Health Sciences Library (HSL) in printed journals. This list will not reflect journal volumes which are checked out.

If an article is available through the Internet, this icon will be visible in the abstract view of the PubMed citation. Please Note: Full-text articles are only available on computers connected to West Virginia University's network. Publisher embargos, licensing restrictions, and publishers who do not participate in the LinkOut program will not be listed in this service. The icons do not reflect the entire list of electronic journals of West Virginia University. Those journals are listed at http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/ejournals
Truncation

Truncation is a method to look for singular, plural, and various forms of a word. For example, typing the word well with an asterisk, murder * will search for any word that begins with this prefix, i.e. murders, murdering, murderous.

Combining Search Terms

Often research topics are not limited to one topic but combine multiple topics. You need to understand how the program combines topics.

AND is the intersection of two sets or topics (these topics are usually different)
Measles AND Therapy

A AND B

OR is the union of two sets or topics (these topics are often synonyms or similar)
Bufferin OR Aspirin

A OR B

You may enter one or more terms (e.g., vitamin c common cold) in the Search box and press the enter key or click Go. PubMed automatically combines (ANDs) significant terms together using automatic term mapping. The terms are searched in various fields of the record. Boolean operators AND, OR, NOT must be in upper case, e.g., vitamin c OR zinc. The computer searches left to right except for information in parentheses which is completed first.

A sample search you can try later: You are asked to find articles on vitamin C OR zinc and common cold.
1. Type vitamin C OR zinc AND common cold in the Search box
2. Select Go.
3. Limit the search to humans and English Language. 2000-2005
Refining a Search

- Search results can be improved by: 1) limiting the words to the title or title/abstract field, 2) looking at the best description(s) article(s) and selecting on the related articles and/or
  - Try the related articles section

- 3) marking several good articles and changing the display to Abstract by clicking on the display settings hyperlink. MeSH Terms are listed at the end of the record(s).
- MeSH terminology provides a consistent way to retrieve information that may use different terminology for the same concepts. Terms with * at the end are the most relevant to your topic and can be used in the Search box to refine your search.
MeSH Database

MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) is used to index citations primarily to reflect subject content. PubMed’s MeSH Database is available on PubMed’s sidebar menu. This Database helps you find MeSH terms that you may want to select and use in your searches. It provides information about each term and displays them in a hierarchical structure. In addition, users can directly attach subheadings and limit terms to a MeSH Major Term. When you enter a term that is not a valid MeSH term, the MeSH Browser will check against the MeSH Mappings and display the associated MeSH term.

You are interested in finding articles about chewing tobacco use in the state of Utah. While you could do this in the normal search menu, it is much more efficient to use the MeSH database. So click on the MeSH database hyperlink under More Services to start this process.
Click on Tobacco, Smokeless hyperlink

More Specific Terms

What about Utah or other Geographic Locations?
Tobacco, smokeless [MeSH]

Search PubMed [Clear]

Display [Full] [Show 10] [Send to] [Search Box with AND]

- If making selections (e.g., Subheadings, etc.), use the Send to Search Box feature to see PubMed records with those specifications.
- Select PubMed under the Links menu to retrieve all records for the MeSH Term.
- Select NLM MeSH Browser under the Links menu for additional information.

1: Utah

Subheadings:
- epidemiology

- Restrict Search to Major Topic headings only
- Do Not Explose this term (i.e., do not include MeSH terms found below this term in the MeSH tree).

All MeSH Categories
Geographical Location Category
Geography, Location
- Americas
- North America
- United States

MeSH
National Library of Medicine

Search for

Tobacco, smokeless [MeSH] AND "Southwestern United States"

Search PubMed [Clear]

Display [Full] [Show 10] [Send to] [Search Box with AND]

- If making selections (e.g., Subheadings, etc.), use the Send to Search Box feature to see PubMed records with those specifications.
- Select PubMed under the Links menu to retrieve all records for the MeSH Term.
- Select NLM MeSH Browser under the Links menu for additional information.

1: Southwestern United States
The geographic area of the southwestern region of the United States. The states usually included in this region are Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah.
Year introduced: 1989

Find the articles you want

Items 1 - 20 of 44
Emailing records from Search Results

Printing

Mark the articles you want. Consider sending them to the clipboard Go to Send to and select the E-mail option. Follow the instructions on the next screen.

Printing from Search Results:
Consider using the Show option to increase the number of citations on the page.

- Display the citations in the format you want to print before activating the print function on your browser. Please refer to the Display Formats section under PubMed's Help.

Printing Selected Citations:
You may want to print selected items from one or more searches on a single page. You can do this by collecting them in PubMed's Clipboard:

1. Click in the box next to each citation you want and then click on Send to. Using the pull-down menu select Clipboard. The Clipboard can hold up to 500 items for 8 hours
2. Within the Clipboard, display the citations in the format you want to print.
3. Use your browser's print function to print the page.

Sources of Help

Look at the Using PubMed Column on the far left hand side. Click on the PubMed Tutorial or PubMed FAQs. Alternatively contact the Health Sciences Library Reference Desk at HSLinfo@mail.wvu.edu or (304) 293-6810.