Introduction to UBC Library Resources

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Agenda

Learn about:

● Your library resources
● research guide for public health: guides.library.ubc.ca/spph
● defining your research question for successful literature searching
● strengths of Google Scholar vs. PubMed vs. Ovid Medline
● tips for searching PubMed and Ovid Medline
● what other databases and grey literature search sources are available
● ways to keep current
Library resources

Top Ten Tips

Subject librarians

Statistical programs available in Woodward Lab
Why not just use Google Scholar for all your literature searching?
How to search - the PICO framework

Patient or Population
Intervention or Issue (exposure, risk factor, etc)
Comparison (optional)
Outcome

Why use PICO? It’s optional, but for many topics it can help you structure your research question for better searching in databases.

Example:
In children aged 6-12, can a web-based education program reduce obesity?
PICO continued

P: children 6-12
I: web-based education program
C: (n/a)
O: obesity

When searching databases, you might only include a couple of the elements (usually P and I, or I and C)

Note that PICO doesn’t apply to all questions - the important thing is to break your question into its key ideas, and think about the different ways each of those key ideas might be written about in the literature.
PubMed and Medline

- Medline is the key database for biomedical journal literature, indexing around 5600 journals.
- It's searchable through PubMed, and also through other interfaces like Ovid Medline.
- A key feature of Medline is MeSH – Medical Subject Headings, which bring together articles on similar topics no matter what keywords are used to describe an idea.
MeSH terms

• **Sample article** with MeSH terms

• When you do a search, check the Search Details box (right sidebar) to see how PubMed ran your search. PubMed tries to match the words you put in to MeSH terms – this is called Automatic Term Mapping.

• Sometimes Automatic Term Mapping works well, other times it doesn't and you get odd search results!

• To search for MeSH, change the drop-down menu at the top from “PubMed” to “MeSH”
Filters can help narrow down your search results. Check the search details box to see exactly what PubMed has searched.
Ovid MEDLINE

Why search here instead of PubMed?

- Step-by-step mapping to MeSH terms – easier to find MeSH and build complex searches than in PubMed
- Easier to export references to citation management software than PubMed

Tutorials at: http://guides.library.ubc.ca/medline
Search for one concept of your PICO at a time:

- Combine similar terms for the same concept (for instance, all the intervention terms) with OR
- Then combine each piece of your PICO with AND
• When you're looking at a MeSH term, check the **Tree** (by clicking the link for your term, eg Obesity) and the **Scope Note**. This ensures you're using the right term, and can point you to other MeSH terms that might be useful.

• **Explode** – Finds MeSH term + any narrower MeSH terms. Check the Tree to see whether it’s worth doing.

• **Focus** – may limit search too much.

• **Subheadings** – may be useful depending on your topic
Ovid Medline - additional tips

- Sometimes, there’s no good MeSH term for your topic. Then you’ll need to use keywords to search.
- You can also combine keywords with MeSH terms using OR to broaden your search.
- Keywords in Ovid show up with “.mp” at the end, which stands for “many places” - Ovid searches for an exact match of the characters entered in the title, abstract, and other data (but not the full text of the article).
- You can use an asterisk at the end of a word to find different word endings:
  - Epidem* finds epidemiology, epidemic, epidemiologist, epidemiological…
Activity

For a topic of your choice, build an Ovid Medline search using MeSH terms and/or keywords.

If you do not have a topic in mind use:

Among people who have had a stroke does the use of Kinect or wii improve balance?

Analyse the PICO before developing your search.

Check your answer on the Search Strategy Explained handout
Other databases

Web of Science
EMBASE
CINAHL
CAB Global Health

And many more...

For a comprehensive search – eg, for your thesis/dissertation or a systematic review – it’s crucial to search more than one database. Medline only covers about 60% of the medical literature, and little of the social sciences literature.
Grey literature

- Databases like EMBASE, CAB Global Health, Web of Science include some grey literature (mainly conference abstracts)
- Des Libris is useful for Canadian policy documents
- Theses
- Google with site: command for organizations who might be producing literature in your area

More ideas at: guides.library.ubc.ca/greylitforhealth
Keeping current

In addition to creating search alerts in Medline and other databases, other resources for keeping current include:

- Citation alerts in Google Scholar and Web of Science
- JournalTOCs – via RSS; or individual websites
- Prospero (systematic reviews in progress)
- HSRProj database (health systems research projects in progress)
Keeping organized

The UBC Library Research Commons offers workshops and one-on-one consults on citation management software, literature reviews, NVivo, and more:

http://guides.library.ubc.ca/library_research_commons
Publishing your work

The Library’s Scholarly Communications office has guidance on ways to publish your work open access:

scholcomm.ubc.ca/open-access

For support with managing your research data, please see this guide:

researchdata.library.ubc.ca/

Be wary of predatory journals and conferences. If you haven’t heard of a journal before, you can check whether it’s included in the Directory of Open Access Journals - one marker of quality.

doaj.org
Library resources

Remember:

Subject librarians

Statistical programs available in Woodward Lab