Leveraging PubMed for Better Searches

Part 1 of an occasional series on how to get more out of your PubMed Searches. What baffles or frustrates you about using PubMed? If you wonder, others do, too. Send your questions about searching PubMed and other databases to us at crdamc.library@amedd.army.mil.

Use of quotation marks—We tend to use quotation marks when searching for a specific phrase. It is a strategy that works in most databases and search engines. Using quotation marks in PubMed can have unintended effects; it turns off the PubMed feature called “automated term mapping (ATM).”

Automated term mapping is a powerful feature that maps what you type into the search box with the controlled vocabulary and subject taxonomy of MEDLINE. When a search term is entered, the search engine looks at your statement and tries to match it as follows:

- Is it something found in the Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) translation table?
- Is it the name or standard abbreviation for a journal?
- Is it an author or collaborator’s name?
- Is it an investigator’s name?

When a match is found, the mapping process ends. The database considers the next word in your search statement until all terms in your query are mapped or until they fail to map. The search engine connects all of your terms with an “AND” operator and searches across all searchable fields.

When quotation marks are used, you are bypassing ATM. Bypassing ATM matters because the MeSH translation table includes subject headings and subheadings, “See Also” references, publication types, pharmacological action terms, supplementary concept (substance) names and their synonyms. ATM will map your term so that all variations of the term will be included in the search. If you search “infection,” ATM will map the word to infect, infected, infecting, infectious and so on.

For example, if searching the phrase “chikungunya infection” without using quotation marks, the search engine returns the five items that include “chikungunya,” which is misspelled. PubMed asks “Did you mean chikungunya infection (658 items)?” and gives a link to the 658 item result set for the correct spelling of the term, a “See Also” term mapping.

By contrast, when searching the misspelled phrase “chickungunya infection” with quotation marks, PubMed only gives you those same 5 items stating “quoted phrase not found.” If the searcher does not notice the typographical error, he or she is left with the impression that the incidence of the term in the medical literature is exceedingly rare (five times) and may never discover the other 658 citations. By using quotes, the “See Also” feature is turned off, and the search engine never matches the misspelled word to the proper spelling.

Learning how quotation marks impact search results allows the searcher to manipulate the search deliberately. It is one piece of knowledge to help you leverage PubMed to your advantage.

CRDAMC Contributes to Professional Knowledge


Are you working on a publication or presentation? We want to acknowledge your work! Contact us at crdamc.library@amedd.army.mil for inclusion in the next newsletter.
FY 13 Changes for Your Medical Library

AMEDD Virtual Library

The AMEDD Virtual Library (AVL) is a comprehensive collection of medical information resources that is provided by the AMEDD Library Program Office. The AVL is available to you regardless of which MTF is your post of duty. The AVL is accessible through AKO.

As of 1 October 2012, the Natural Standard Database will no longer be offered in the AVL database resources. Users of this resource will want to explore the Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database (NMCD). NMCD is produced by the publishers of the Prescriber’s Letter and describes itself as “Unbiased, Scientific Clinical Information on Complementary, Alternative, and Integrative Therapies.” This resource is provided by the DoD and includes CE credits for military prescribers.

UptoDate: UptoDate has added psychiatry content. According to the press release, coverage includes “psychotic disorders, depressive disorders, bipolar disorders, anxiety disorders, somatoform disorders, eating disorders, impulse control disorders, substance-use disorders and personality disorders.

CRDAMC Medical Library

CENTRAL SEARCH DISCONTINUED: The ProQuest Central Search service will be discontinued as of 30 September. In its absence, the Medical Library will continue to incorporate information resources into the online catalog to create more of a “one stop” destination for your information needs.

LIBRARY CATALOG SOFTWARE UPGRADE: At the time of this newsletter’s publication, the CRDAMC Library’s online catalog is scheduled for upgrade at the end of September. If your links to the catalog suddenly cease functioning, please update your bookmarks and favorites.

LINKOUT TO PUBMED:
You can access full text provided by your medical library when searching PubMed. Links to local holdings in PubMed can be identified by the green “360 Link to Full Text” graphic shown here:

To get local holdings to show up in your PubMed searches:
   This link can be found on the library’s Online Resources page and in the catalog indexed under “PubMed.”
   Or
2) Login to your “MyNCBI” account and select CRDAMC as your medical library.

LOANSOME DOC: The CRDAMC Medical Library now participates in Lonesome Doc. Lonesome Doc allows you to order articles from the library when searching in PubMed. Register for Lonesome Doc at https://docline.gov/loansome/login.cfm. Contact the Medical Library for the user authentication code at crdamc.library@amedd.army.mil.

ELECTRONIC BOOKS: Look for updates to content in the eBrary and MyILibrary electronic book collections as well as new ebooks in our EBSCO databases. The books in these collections are cataloged like physical books. They can be accessed through links found in our online catalog as well as through the individual collections.

RESOURCES FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK:
Check the ProQuest database link on the Online Resources page for Social Services Abstracts, ProQuest Social Science Journals, and ProQuest Psychology Journals. These resources add full-text coverage for more than 500 additional journals in these subject areas and indexing to the literature of social work including journal articles, dissertations, and book reviews.

PsychiatryOnline featuring the DSM-IV-TR, its companion volumes and more—details to follow!
The Advanced Life Support Obstetrics (ALSO) course is a vital component of Family Medicine’s Residency Program. ALSO helps train residents to become Family Medicine practitioners with an acumen to handle OB/GYN complications and emergencies.

The rate of childbirth at CRDAMC ranges between 2500 to 2800 annually. By using a simulation based curriculum family medicine is able to provide an environment where residents develop core competencies that promote confidence and teamwork.

Training topics for the ALSO Course include:

- Fetal Surveillance
- Vacuum Extraction
- Forceps Application
- Postpartum Hemorrhage
- Shoulder Dystocia
- Episiotomy Repair

Approximately eleven students and eleven staff instructors participated in this course. The Simulation Center is able to accommodate requests for similar group training events. Please contact us at a minimum of 48-72 hours prior to an event.

“Trained, Competent and Ready”
Pictured right is a photo taken during a deep tissue suturing workshop; curriculum based training objectives can be facilitated at the Simulation Center with prior planning. The Simulation Center provides everything needed for your training session from large screen monitors and lap-tops to tables and chairs.

Having flexibility and the ability to reproduce a realistic environment provides tools in which the trainer is capable of tailoring their presentation to students.

Contact the Simulation Center at 254-553-2070 for scheduling your next event.

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