

Pubmed

What is PubMed?

PubMed is a resource provided by the US National Institutes of Health. Its subject coverage is **biomedicine and health**, along with aspects of behavioural sciences, bioengineering, chemical sciences and life sciences. The main component of PubMed is **MEDLINE**, a database which indexes articles and other documents from across 5,600 worldwide publications. Most of these publications are **academic journals**; a small number are newspapers, magazines and newsletters. PubMed also provides access to online books, websites and molecular biology resources. **Date coverage** is generally 1946 to present, with some older material provided. **Please note:** by searching further resources, you may find additional articles of interest. To access these resources, please connect to <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/subjects/>.

Accessing PubMed

The best way to connect to PubMed off-campus is to use a link from within the Library's website or catalogue: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/>. This will make it easier to access the full-text of indexed articles e.g. those articles published within journals to which the Library subscribes.

Searching by Subject Heading (MeSH)

MEDLINE indexers read all the articles and assign them relevant Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). There are benefits to searching PubMed by selecting MeSH terms rather than entering multiple "key words". For example, you can select a single MeSH term such as neoplasms, and PubMed will automatically search for cancers and tumours as well. You can also identify a MeSH term in relation to broader/narrower terms to help you find either more or fewer results e.g. 'Eczema' is listed within terms for 'Dermatitis'; 'Dermatis' is listed within 'Skin diseases'.

How to search using MeSH:

- Select MeSH from the drop-down menu next to the PubMed search box. Type a word or phrase and click 'Search'. Then, tick the relevant MeSH term(s). Finally, click 'add to search builder' and 'search PubMed'.
- For more help: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uyF8uQY9wys> and <http://nnlm.gov/training/resources/meshtri.pdf>.

Searching by key words, journal title & author

- **Key words:** if you are unable to find a MeSH heading for your topic, select 'PubMed' from the drop-down menu next to the search box. You can type a sentence (e.g. drugs for asthma) and PubMed will search for both the important words in the sentence and similar words. Click 'Search'.
- **Journal title:** click 'Advanced' (below the search box) and select 'Journal' from the first drop-down menu. Type the journal title in the search box. Click 'Search'. **If searching for The Lancet:** don't type the word 'The'. Click 'Search'.

Author name: click 'Advanced'. From the first drop down menu choose 'Author'. Type the author's surname (e.g. Smith) in the search box. Click 'Search'.

Refining your results

You can limit your search by selecting options from the filters on the left of the search results screen. This enables you to focus your search and get a more manageable number of results. You can also specify publication types (e.g. practice guidance, trials), language or publication date etc. To view more options, click 'Show additional filters' (e.g. gender, age).

Viewing articles

When you find a useful search result in PubMed, click on its title. This usually takes you to page featuring a summary and links to related articles. You might also find a link to the full article in the top right-hand side. If no such link exists, you may find the article by searching Google Scholar.

Saving & emailing results

Select individual results by ticking the box next to the reference or save all results by leaving the boxes empty. Next to 'Send to' (located above the results), choose 'File' from the drop-down menu. You can then save this document to a drive of your choice. Alternatively, choose 'E-mail' from the drop-down menu, type your email address and click 'E-mail'. To save results to Endnote or Endnote Online please refer to: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/infoskills/endnote/index.html>.

Storing searches & setting up email alerts

You can store a search strategy so you don't have to re-enter the same search terms when you next enter PubMed to update your search. You can also set up an e-mail alert so that PubMed will tell you when it adds any new articles matching your search terms. To use these features, register for a username and password by clicking on the NCBI links. For more information: <https://youtu.be/WbFjV91YNNY>.

Viewing your search history & combining results

- **Click 'Advanced'** to view the history section - this lists your most recent PubMed searches (saved for up to 8 hours). To retrieve a set of results, click the number of results displayed next to the relevant listed search.
- **Why combine results?** You might, for example, want to limit your search to finding articles on a particular topic that have been published in a specific journal e.g. 'asthma' in the 'Lancet'. You could do this by running two separate searches; the first searching for 'asthma' (regardless of publication) and the second searching for the 'Lancet' (regardless of topic). Finally, you would need to combine the two sets of results as follows:
- **How to combine results:** Click 'Advanced' and view the history section. You will see that each search is allocated a number e.g. #1, #2. Click ADD next to each of the searches that need combining. Then, select AND, OR or NOT and click 'Search' (With the Lancet/Asthma example above, you would select AND).

More help

Please refer to online tutorials: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/disted/pubmed.html> or contact/visit your Subject Librarian: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/services/contact/enquiry.html>.

LJH/KB/JW: Aug 2017
Information correct at time of going to print