ADVANCED LITERATURE SEARCHING USING MEDLINE VIA OVID

Our OVID suite of databases provides extensive coverage of literature relating to health and social care. Titles include: Embase, Medline, HMIC (Health Management Information Consortium), PsycINFO, AMED (Allied and Complementary Medicine), British Nursing Index and Maternity and Infant Care.

Log on at [www.athensams.net/myathens](http://www.athensams.net/myathens) Enter your NHS Athens username and password

and then click on Resources tab
Click on Local Resources

Scroll down and click on OVID Online

Select the database you wish to search.
The advanced search tab offers the following search features: keyword, author, title and journal. For example choose title and type a term or phrase into the command line. Make sure the radio button for title has been selected.

This will retrieve all items with your term or phrase in the title of the article as below.
Journal searching lets you search for words and phrases in all journal titles in the database. From the advanced search page choose Journal field and enter your chosen journal title. Hit search button.

You will be presented with an alphabetical listing of the journals in this database. When you find the journal you want to retrieve, put a tick in the appropriate box and hit search for selected terms.
All searches you conduct will be posted to your search history. You can then use your Boolean logic AND, OR, NOT to combine sets together and retrieve more relevant hits. Tick boxes in your search history and combine with AND.

You will see this reduces the search results because your search has been focused on one search topic in one particular journal.

Now your results contain pressure sores in title of journal and all hits are from the Lancet journal.
Many databases use what is known as a controlled vocabulary to index articles. Each common medical concept is given a single subject heading which covers all the words and phrases used to describe that concept – for example, Pressure Ulcer is a subject heading which covers pressure sores.

To find a subject heading type in your term and make sure the Map Term to Subject Heading is ticked, then click search.

This will offer you the preferred search term for your topic – in this case, Pressure Ulcer instead of Pressure Sores. Then click continue.
This screen displays all the subheadings that we can use to refine our search. For example, prevention and control of pressure sores.

Make your selection and click continue and results are displayed as below, showing focused search of pressure ulcer, prevention and control.
Go through your results and mark any items you want to save with a tick. Take note that you can also download any full text items you may retrieve.

Try limiting your search to reduce your results further. Click on *limits*.
Applying limits focuses your search and reduces the number of records in your results set, – eg. choosing publication year 2006 – current will only retrieve those records that were published between those dates. Then click search again.

If you want to be even more specific then try using Additional Limits.

![Image of search interface]

Make your choices, click the relevant search line radio button in your search history, then click Limit a Search.

When you are ready to print/save your ticked items make your choice.
Enter the email address of recipient, if you want to include the search history tick that box and also choose what style you want your references to be sent in, ie. APA Referencing style, then click *send email.*

You are now ready to start another search.

**TIPS FOR SEARCHING**

**Boolean:**

Boolean operators include: **AND**  **OR**  **NOT**

**AND** will reduce the number of hits we retrieve because we are looking for both search concepts in our results, ie hits with both Lancet and Pressure Ulcer (Prevention and Control).

**NOT** needs to be used with caution. If I want articles on Pressure Ulcer (Prevention and Control) and NOT in the Lancet I am restricting my results.

**OR** will increase my results because I will receive hits that contain either Lancet or Pressure Ulcer (Prevention and Control).

If you want to increase the number of hits you retrieve try unlimited truncation using $ (dollar sign) or : (colon). Eg. Type in disease$ and OVID retrieves the word disease, diseased, diseases and more. To be used with care!
The optional wild card can be used to substitute for one or no characters. This is useful for retrieving documents with British and American word variants ie. the optional wild card search colo?r retrieves results that contain the words *color* or *colour*. However if there is only one letter in front of where you want to place the wildcard it won’t work. eg. f?etal results in an error message.

Jan 2011