Physical Therapy Workshop. August 10, 2001, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

ACCESS TO PUBMED

*PubMed* is a free government-sponsored database. It is, therefore, not on NSU’s Electronic Library menu that lists only subscription databases. It can be found on the Internet. *PubMed*’s URL is “http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi.” If you think this URL is too long or bothersome to remember, simply use your favorite search engine and type into the query box at the top: “pubmed.” The process is shown in the image below. The search engine you see here is that of Google, Inc. If you wish to use this particular search engine, its URL is www.google.com.

Type the URL into the box and click on “Google Search” or simply press the “Enter” key on your computer. You will be shown a list of sites on the Internet. Be forewarned, though. Many of the sites shown on the list will turn out to be useless, as they are not true connections, just guides. Below, however, you will see several that are true links to *PubMed*. The arrows point to those links which are productive. The word “Entrez” in the name is usually a giveaway for the correct link.
Once you have clicked on the correct name on the list, you should find the page shown below. The topic of the search has already been entered into the query box. The side panel on the left shows a rather long list of options. For purposes of this tutorial, however, we will concentrate only on those features which are necessary to do simple but completely adequate searches. When you have time, you might want to go through the tutorial whose access point is the text “NEW” on the side panel on the left. See the arrow on the left. PubMed, you will learn, is quite powerful. To execute any search, click on the “Go” button to the right.

THE DETAILS BUTTON AND BOOLEAN SYNTAX

You will notice that the search statement contains a Boolean operator. Some databases require that the operators be typed in upper case. In this database, however, the Boolean operators do not need to be capitalized. If you wish to see the search statement in Boolean terms, you will need to click on the “Details” box.
The image below shows the Boolean search in its nested form, that is, with all of the syntax necessary to execute the search more precisely. You can learn a lot by looking at these nested queries.

The articles retrieved, the “hits,” are listed in groups of twenty articles. Scroll down to the ones that you find most pertinent. In the list below, you can see one or two that appear to be very relevant. See the arrows on the left. Notice also that there is a feature that allows you find articles that are supposed to be similar or related to the one you consider pertinent. See the arrow to the right. After checking to see if the article is indeed useful to you, click on the text “Related Articles” to generate another list of articles that might be closer to your search objectives.
Here, below, is the new list generated by clicking on “Related Articles.” Notice that the article that you used to pinpoint your search is the top article of the new list.

To see the article in greater detail, simply click on the underlined author’s name. What you see next is the citation and abstract of the article. Notice also the functions at the top of the image. You can save the text, order it, and so forth.
At the bottom of the image, you can see the article is given what is called a “unique identifier” specific to PubMed. If you were to type the unique identifier into the query box, it would retrieve this specific article in this database.

The PMID, or the unique identifier for PubMed, is followed by text indicating that the article is indexed for Medline. Medline is a government-sponsored database that all vendors use as the foundation of their products. Ovid, for example, uses the government database and builds its search engine and other features around it. Medline has its own system of identifying a specific article. This is called a “unique identifier” or “UI.”

**LIMITERS**

As in most databases, PubMed allows you to use various limiters. Below, you can see a group of these limiters.
You can limit by specifying the field in which you wish to conduct the search. See the image below for the options.

You can limit by publication type. Below, you can see these options.

You can limit by the age of the subjects. Below are the age options.

You can limit by publication date. Here the range is set to 1999-2001.
You can also limit by language.

And you can limit in other ways, including subsets. You can see subset options in the image shown below.

From the display of the limiters, you can see that *PubMed*, though free, is quite a powerful database.

**SAVING AND PRINTING THE ARTICLES**

In order to save the articles for your records, you must select those that you want to keep. To do so, click in the boxes that you see to the left of the authors’ names. See the arrows to the left of the image. Continue to click in the boxes to the left of the authors, until you have gone through the entire list.
Then click on the print button at the top of the browser’s window. See the arrow on the top. The articles that you have selected will then be made available to you for your research.

Because *PubMed* is free and made readily available to the public by the United States government, you can always use it: no matter where you are and under what circumstances. It might be the database that you use most of all.