UCSF Health
Institute for Nursing Excellence

In search of the evidence:
How to start your search in support of evidence-based practice

Incorporating evidence into clinical decision-making is critical to evidence-based practice and our Magnet designation. PubMed is a good source for finding evidence for clinical questions, but searching the literature can be daunting. Librarians are here to help, but these tips can get you started.

- **Access PubMed via the Fishbon Library:** Use the PubMed link found on the web site https://fishbon.ucsfmedicalcenter.org/ to ensure you have full-text access to UCSF's journals.

- **Start with keywords:** In the search box, type the words that best describe your concept. PubMed uses an algorithm to find synonyms and related terms to capture all relevant articles (e.g., searching **bed sores** also finds articles on pressure ulcers).

- **Combine terms:** Use AND to combine multiple terms and to narrow your search. For example, **bed sores AND aloe vera** will retrieve articles that include both terms.

- **Truncate:** Use an asterisk (*) at the end of a word to find all alternate endings (e.g., **ulcer*** will find ulcers, ulceration, etc.). But be cautious – truncation could lead to too many alternate (and potentially unwanted) endings and will turn off the algorithm that finds related terms.

- **Use PubMed filters:** Filters may be used to narrow your search results. Once you have a list of results, you can narrow the search by article type (e.g., Systematic Review), date, language and/or population age. Find filters on the left side of the results screen. Select "Additional filters" to use other filters, such as limiting to nursing journals only.

For assistance, please send your request via the INEx Portal:

Ari Kleiman, MLIS
Clinical Research Librarian
Patients & Families
415-885-7285
ari.kleiman@ucsf.edu

Michelle Lieggi, MLS
Clinical Research Librarian
Systematic Reviews & Research
415-353-9699
michelle.lieggi@ucsf.edu

Laura Olson, MSLIS
Clinical Research Librarian
Clinical Staff Support
415-885-7887
laura.olson@ucsf.edu