

The World Wide Web

- Fastest growing public resource for information
- Searching the Web can be frustrating if you don't know some of the basics of how it works
- Searching the Web can be overwhelming if you don't know how to refine your searches to get what you want and not just hundreds of "hits" or potentially useless bits of information

Categories of Search Tools

- Search engines (and meta searches including coordinated searches with directories)
- Subject directories or index searching
- Specialized databases (the invisible web)

What is a Browser?

- A browser is software that is used to look at various types of Internet resources
- Common examples: Netscape
Microsoft Explorer
Outlook
AOL

What is a Search Engine?

- A search engine is a web-based system for searching the information available on the net
- A search engine analyzes the text and searches for matching terms in an index file

Common Search Engines

- Alta Vista: <http://www.altavista.com>
- Google: <http://www.google.com>
- Metacrawler: <http://www.metacrawler.com>
- Northern Light: <http://www.northernlight.com>
- MSNBCi (SNAP): <http://www.nbc.com>
- YAHOO! <http://www.yahoo.com>

Search Engines

- Allow you the ability to search by text word or key word
- Give you a large number of resources many of which will be general and not relevant to your search
- Meta search engines (such as metacrawler) search several search engines at once

How to Use a Search Engine

- In the address box – you can type in a specific URL or Internet address such as: www.amta.org or www.cmta.ca
- Or, you can type in a key word in the search box and follow the links
- Some of the major search engines allow you to refine your search by using works such as AND, OR, NOT, NEAR (more on this later)

Subject Directories

- Examples of subject directories are:
Librarians'Index, Infomine, Yahoo, Academic Info
- Subject directories are indexed by people who are subject experts
- They are evaluated frequently and up to date
- They do not provide the full text
- They are time consuming to use

Specialized Databases

- Known as the invisible web
- Some have public access (e.g. PubMed)
- Some you must subscribe to (Medline, AltHealthWatch, AcademicElite)
- Membership in a library (public or academic) can give you access to the world's great medical and health-based databases
- Sometimes they can provide you with remote access through your home PC

Where to Begin

- Search limiters and tools are words that you put into the search box to refine your search
- Search limiters and tools instruct the search engine or database to look only for certain kinds of information
- For example: massage therapy AND cancer OR oncology NOT prostatic

Boolean Operators

- AND (requires that all terms be present)
- OR (requires that at least one of the terms be present)
- NOT (excludes citations with that term in it)
- NEAR (requires that the term be mentioned in the citation, but not necessarily featured)

Other Search Tools and Limiters

- Plus/minus
- Key Words
- Phrases
- Case Sensitivity
- Titles, Subject Headings, Author(s), Date, Publication

Search Strategies

- Choose one or two databases at a time – each database will yield slightly different results
- Combine various search tools and limiters
- Try different potential text words, key words or try synonyms for a word
- Try by author, or by date, or using different Boolean operators – this is all part of creating a search strategy
- Write down your strategy as you create it, so you know how to retrace your steps

Using PubMed

- PubMed is a publicly available reference database maintained by the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland
- It contains over 11 million bibliographic citations from more than 4,000 journals (medicine, nursing, veterinary medicine, life sciences etc.)

Menard, M.B. (2003). Making Sense of Research. A Guide to Research Literacy for Complementary Practitioners. Toronto: Cuties-Overzet. pp. 27-37.

Using PubMed Cont.

- Go to: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query>
- Bookmark (or use Favorites) to save the site

- On the left margin of the screen under Entrez PubMed click on Overview and FAQ (frequently asked questions)
- Click on Cubby to save your search
- In PubMed the search history is lost after one hour of inactivity
- For a simple search, type your text or key word into the query box: e.g. massage therapy AND research

Using PubMed Cont.

- Limit your search by clicking 'Limits' in the 'Features' bar to restrict your search by age, gender, publication date, etc.
- Keeping the default 'All' setting allows you to search for the term in all citation fields
- Text Word means any word found in the text or body of an abstract
- Keywords are specific words used to index an article

Using PubMed Cont.

- MeSH means medical subject headings
- MeSH are the specific keywords that are used to index all the citations in PubMed & Medline
- Click the MeSH browser from the left sidebar to review and choose the keywords that would be useful for your search
- Preview – allows you to see how many results your search retrieved before you see the list of citations
- If the results seem too large, try adding Boolean operators
- If you are trying more than one search, 'History' lists and numbers your searches

Using PubMed Cont.

- View your search results (PubMed displays search results in batches of 20)
- Click 'Display' from the 'Summary' drop down box menu and select 'Abstract Format' to view the abstracts
- Choose the Medline format if you want to save citations to a bibliographic reference software program such as Reference Manager or ProCite

Using PubMed Cont.

- Use 'Related Articles' and 'Link Out' to explore related citations
- Add useful citations by using 'Clipboard'
- Use Cubby to save search strategies or view previously saved searches

- When you click on Cubby, you need to register to use this service – follow the links

Using PubMed Cont.

- PubMed will only show you abstracts of some articles (use 'Link Out' to go to the publishers to find out if you can print out full texts of the articles or order online)
- If you want to order the full text you can also use Loansome Doc (part of PubMed) for a fee
- Or, you can use your local library to order full texts of articles for a small fee

Using PubMed Cont.

- At the bottom of the left sidebar under 'Related Resources' click 'Consumer Health' to go to 'Medlineplus'
- Or, click on 'Clinical Alerts' to see the results of recent clinical trials conducted through the NIH

Medical Journals Online

- Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine: <http://www.alternativetherapies.com>
- The Journal of the American Medical Association: <http://www.jama.ama-assn.org/issues>
- British Medical Journal: <http://www.bmj.com>

Medical Journals Online

- The Lancet: <http://www.thelancet.com>
- The New England Journal of Medicine: <http://www.nejm.org>

For an extensive list, go to:

- <http://www.freemedicaljournals.com>
- <http://www.altmedicine.com>

Other Resources: CAHC Databases

- Rosenthal Center for Complementary Medicine at Columbia University: <http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/rosenthal>
- CISCOM (Centralized Information Service for Complementary Medicine) at the Research Council for Complementary Medicine (RCCM) in London: <http://www.rccm.org.uk>

Other Resources: CAHC Databases

- National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine:
<http://nccam.nih.gov>
- Health Canada:
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>
- Camline:
<http://www.camline.ca>

Other Resources: Massage Therapy

- AMTA Foundation
<http://www.amtafoundation.org>
- CMTA
<http://www.cmta.ca>
- Touch Research Institute
<http://www.miami.edu/touch-research/home/html>

Other Resources: Massage Therapy Publications

- AMTA Massage Therapy Journal:
<http://www.amtamassageorg/journal/home.htm>
- Massage Therapy Canada Magazine:
<http://www.massagetherapymag.com>

Other Resources: Chiropractic

- Consortium Center for Chiropractic Research:
<http://www.c3r.org/home>
- <http://www.chiroweb.com/archives/10/04/05.html>
- <http://www.chiro.org>
- <http://www.chiropage.com>

Other Resources: Acupuncture

- The Society for Acupuncture Research:
<http://www.acupunctureresearch.org>