Evidence-Based Medicine Skills
Step 1: Background vs Foreground Questions

For further research assistance access the Wahlstrom Library website via the myUB Portal.

Ask a Librarian via Chat: Available when the Library is open through the Library website.

E-mail a Librarian: reference@bridgeport.edu

Call a Librarian: 203-576-4747

Walk-ins welcome, no appointment needed!
In Evidence-Based Medicine there are two types of questions ...

**Background Questions** (broad, general)
A background question is a ...

⇒ Who?
⇒ What?
⇒ How?
⇒ When?
⇒ Where?
⇒ Why ?
... type of question

Answers to background questions are often found in academic textbooks, reference books, and reference databases.

Tip: Credo eReference is a great reference database for this type of information.

**Examples of Background Questions:**
- What is acetaminophen?
- Where is the best area to inject the yearly influenza vaccine?
- Why does an ice pack help ease the pain caused by a sprain?
- When is it okay to begin physical therapy after knee surgery?

Need help? Ask a librarian! We can assist you in developing these questions and locating relevant sources.

**Foreground Questions** (specific, very detailed)
A foreground question contains information about ...

⇒ P - A patient, population or problem
⇒ I - An intervention
⇒ C - A comparison intervention (if applicable)
⇒ O - A desired outcome

A **PICO Form** is often used to create a complete foreground question. Answers to foreground questions are found in research journals and databases.

Useful databases for this type of information include (but are not limited to):
CINAHL, PubMed, Cochrane, and Ovid. For a complete list visit the library website.

**Examples of Foreground questions:**
- In a 25-year-old male with lower back pain, will physical therapy offer faster pain relief than a standard dose of acetaminophen?
- In a 55-year-old woman with ischemic stroke, should aspirin be given before or after 4.5 hours to decrease mortality?
- In a 3-year-old male, would chiropractic manipulation provide superior reduction of nocturnal enuresis compared to a standard dose of desmopressin?