Evidence-Based Medicine Skills

Step 2: Finding the Evidence

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!
Precise Searching Techniques

In Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM), the goal is to search efficiently and precisely for the evidence to answer your clinical foreground question, and to find fewer but more relevant sources.

The PICO form allows you to quickly gather the crucial, relevant keywords that describe your clinical question.

Using the following example of a PICO form:

**P:** 10 year-old male with mild persistent asthma

**I:** Cromolyn 4 times/day

**C:** Montelukast once/day

**O:** Reduce asthma attack frequency

The relevant keywords for searching for research articles in this case would be:

**Male child, mild asthma, cromolyn, montelukast**

Combined these into a search query using Boolean Operators and we get:

(Male AND child) AND (mild AND asthma) AND cromolyn AND montelukast

Running that search on PubMed found the following results:

1. The effect of montelukast versus usual care on health care resource utilization in children aged 2 to 5 years with asthma.
   - Davies GM, Dadbach EJ, Santaniello MC, Khor BA, Bratton DL.
   - PMID: 15538701 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

2. Montelukast in treatment of mild chronic asthma.
   - Lis G, Chichocka-Jarosz E, Glosz J, Szczeklik-T, Bałorska B.
   - PMID: 11732287 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

3. Preventive monotherapy with montelukast versus OTEC in children with mild asthma. Results of an exploratory pilot study.
   - Liebeke C, Sommerfeld C, Wahn U, Niggemann B.
   - PMID: 1144950 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

It turns out that all 3 of the articles found above help answer the clinical question – so this search has 100% precision! High precision searching is a major goal of Evidence-Based Medical research.

Handouts on the first 3 steps in the Evidence-Based Medicine process are available in the Library, and all of the information is also available on our website in the Evidence-Based section. We also have blank PICO and Critical Appraisal Checklists available on our website.

If you have additional questions or need further assistance, please contact a Librarian using one of the methods on the front of this handout.