Using MeSH to Build a Search Strategy to Search PubMed

©WHSL
Scenario

- Mrs Khumalo is a 67 year old who has for several years been under your care for hypertension. Although her blood pressure has been stable on medication for the last 5 years, at her last check-up it has suddenly risen to 140/100. As You do not want unnecessarily to increase the dosage she is taking, You decide to see if You can find an article showing evidence of the effects of lowering her sodium intake, as she has told you she eats many pre-cooked or take-away meals.
Decide on the main Topics of the Search

• Terms?
  - Hypertension
  - Sodium

• Use MeSH (Medical Subject Headings)
Predictive Text
Click box to select term

Next click "Add to Search Builder"
MeSH term selected
Automatically appears in Search Builder
Search for next MeSH term Sodium
Use MeSH Definitions to find MOST Appropriate Term (Requires Analysis, Thought)

Decide if the term most appropriate to your patient’s problems is “sodium” or “sodium, dietary”? Use the definition to help you decide.

Sodium, Dietary
1. Sodium or sodium compounds used in foods or as a food. The most frequently used compounds are sodium chloride or sodium glutamate.
   Year introduced: 1988

Sodium
2. A member of the alkali group of metals. It has the atomic symbol Na, atomic number 11, and atomic weight 23.
Select the term required by ticking the box.
Add to Search Builder with AND selected.
Click on Search PubMed if your search strategy is complete
Add Filters and Proceed with Search

Your search automatically runs in PubMed. Now add required filters as necessary.
Other Useful Filters

- Date (if you do not want to use the date when the research was most prevalent, you may wish to specify a specific date or a specific date range)
- Patient’s Age
- Language (English)
- Article Types (e.g., Review)
- Note: You may have to show additional filters the first time you search each day, and then select these once they are shown on the sidebar