Using CINAHL Complete

CINAHL is the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature and is one of the health databases offered by the New Jersey State Library.

Anyone may come to the library in person and use CINAHL.

To use the CINAHL database from outside of the library building, you will need to be an “authorized user.” An authorized user is a current New Jersey State employee or a Thomas Edison State College staff member or student with a New Jersey State Library card. You will need the barcode number on the library card to gain access to the database. Authorized users may request a card online here:

http://www.njstatelibrary.org/research_library/get_a_library_card/

To locate CINAHL:

Go to the New Jersey State Library main page: http://www.njstatelibrary.org/

Select the Research Tools tab, and then select Databases.

Choose the By Title alphabetical drop down box and select the letter “C.”

Scroll down and select the link for CINAHL Complete (authorized users: you will need your barcode number to get in remotely at this point).

Keyword Searching

When you first log into the database, you will probably be on the Basic Search screen. To perform a search, enter search terms into the box.

Search Tip:
Use Boolean operators for your search. Boolean operators are the words, AND, OR and NOT.

Example: whooping cough AND outbreaks
Example: (whooping cough OR pertussis) AND outbreaks
Example: common cold AND (vitamin c OR zinc)

Search Tip: Use parentheses to enclose terms and synonyms that you want to “OR” together.
Using Advanced Search

The Advanced Search screen provides more than one search box and enables you to easily separate your search concepts. Choose the Advanced Search option to have access to additional search fields and limits.

For example, you can place terms you want to OR together into its own search box.

You can also select a field in which to search, such as the title or author fields. If you do not select a specific field then by default the search will be in the citation and abstract fields.

Search Tip: Use an asterisk* to search for various forms of a word. Example: prevent* will find prevents, preventing, prevention, preventable, etc.

Search Tip: If you are retrieving too many results, you may want to try searching for your term in a specific field or using limits.
Limits

Select Limits (optional): In CINAHL there are many choices for limiting your search. You will see the limit choices beneath the search boxes.

Limits include:

Full Text - make sure your results will include the entire article, not just the citation and abstract.
Publication date - set the date range you want your results to be from.
Peer Reviewed - make sure your results are from peer-reviewed or scholarly journals.
Publication Type - there are many to choose from including care plans, CEUs, doctoral dissertations, practice guidelines, reviews, questionnaires, research instruments, systematic reviews, etc.

Advanced Search limits also include:

Evidence-Based Practice - finds high levels of evidence such as systematic reviews.
Clinical Queries - another way to finding evidence based articles.
First Author is a Nurse - get a publication written with a first-hand nurse perspective.
Any Author is a Nurse - get a publication that a nurse has contributed to.
Special Interest - narrow down to articles on informatics, dental care, emergency care etc.
Patient groups - there are limits for Inpatients, Outpatients, Pregnancy, Gender and Age Groups.

Questions on using CINAHL? Contact:
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