

## PUBMED FOR PATIENT CARE

### Take home points:

1. PubMed is an easy-to-use tool that every physician should use regularly in order to optimize patient care.
2. With a few “magic search terms”, PubMed makes it easy to find relevant review articles and apply EBM to your patients.
3. The more you use PubMed, the better you will get at it.

### Use the following steps to master PubMed easily and effectively:

**Step 1:** Go to the UCSF library website (<http://www.library.ucsf.edu>) and click on the “PubMed” button. The actual address of the website is:

*<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?holding=ucsf&tool=cdl&otool=cdlotool>*

**Step 2:** Enter your search term, use Boolean modifiers, and use “limits”.

**Boolean modifiers** (must be in ALL CAPS): **AND, OR, NOT** (pretty self-explanatory)

Here’s a key to **limits** (in brackets):

- **glomerulonephritis [ti]** = search for titles that include glomerulonephritis (ti = title)
- **review [pt]** = search only for reviews (pt = publication type)
- **hollander h [au]** = search only for articles by author (au = author)
- **jama [ta]** = search only for articles published in JAMA (ta = journal title)
- **english [la]** = search only for English language articles (la = language)

**Step 3:** Some “magic tricks”:

- **jsubsetaim** = search only for core clinical journals
- **systematic [sb]** = search only for systematic reviews (including meta-analyses)

**Step 4:** Press “Go” and when your search comes up, either click on the title that you are interested in, and you’ll get the abstract. Most recent articles will also have a button that leads you to the full text of the article.

### Some examples:

**To find general review articles:** *say you wanted to look up a review on glomerulonephritis...*

- **glomerulonephritis [ti] AND review [pt] AND english [la]** = 524 articles
- And now for some magic... Enter the following:  
**glomerulonephritis [ti] AND review [pt] AND english [la] AND jsubsetaim**  
= 61 articles (3 of the first 4 are awesome reviews on this subject)

**To find evidence-based medicine (EBM) articles:** *say you were interested in whether or not there is proven benefit to octreotide in your patient with variceal bleeding...*

- **octreotide [ti]** = 1747 articles
- And now for some magic... Enter the following:  
**octreotide [ti] AND systematic [sb]** = 15 articles (the 4<sup>th</sup> article is a great meta-analysis on the subject from UCSF)

### Some more helpful hints:

- Use quotation marks to search for a phrase (e.g. **“livedo reticularis” [ti]**)
- Use the star (\*) key to search for multiple terms that begin with the same letters (e.g. **electrocard\* [ti]** to search for electrocardiogram, electrocardiography, electrocardiographic, etc.)