



MEDLINE



Search Guide



Searching MEDLINE (via Ovid)

Medline is an international biomedical bibliographic database indexing over 4,600 journals from 1946 to the present. Areas covered include medicine, nursing, dentistry, health care systems and public health.

Searching the database

1. Developing a Search Strategy

Before you begin searching you will need to develop a search strategy. This involves analysing the search topic and identifying the main concepts. Each concept may then have a number of different search terms which can describe that concept.

Example Search Topic: Brain damage caused by drug addiction in humans.

Looking at the example search topic, the main concepts are: "Brain Damage" and "Drug Addiction". You can sometimes have several search terms for a concept, i.e.: synonyms or alternative descriptions. In this example, the concept of "Brain Damage" has 2 possible terms: Brain Damage and Brain Injuries, as outlined in the table below.

Example of Concepts & Search Terms:

	Concept 1	Concept 2
	DRUG ADDICTION	BRAIN DAMAGE
Search Term	Drug Addiction	Brain Damage
Search Term		Brain Injuries

2. Database Search Options

There are two main ways of searching databases: **subject heading search** or **keyword search**.

- ❖ **Subject heading searching** allows you to find articles on a particular subject without having to search for every possible phrase or word that an author may have used to describe that subject. It will usually get you fewer but **more relevant results**, than the keyword option.
- ❖ **Keyword searching** is looking for a word or phrase appearing within a citation, so you will usually retrieve lots of results, however they may include a lot of **irrelevant hits**. You also need to think of different terms and spelling that the author may have used to describe that topic, example: smoke, smokes, smokers, smoking, smoked, tobacco. (Keyword searching is described on page 11).

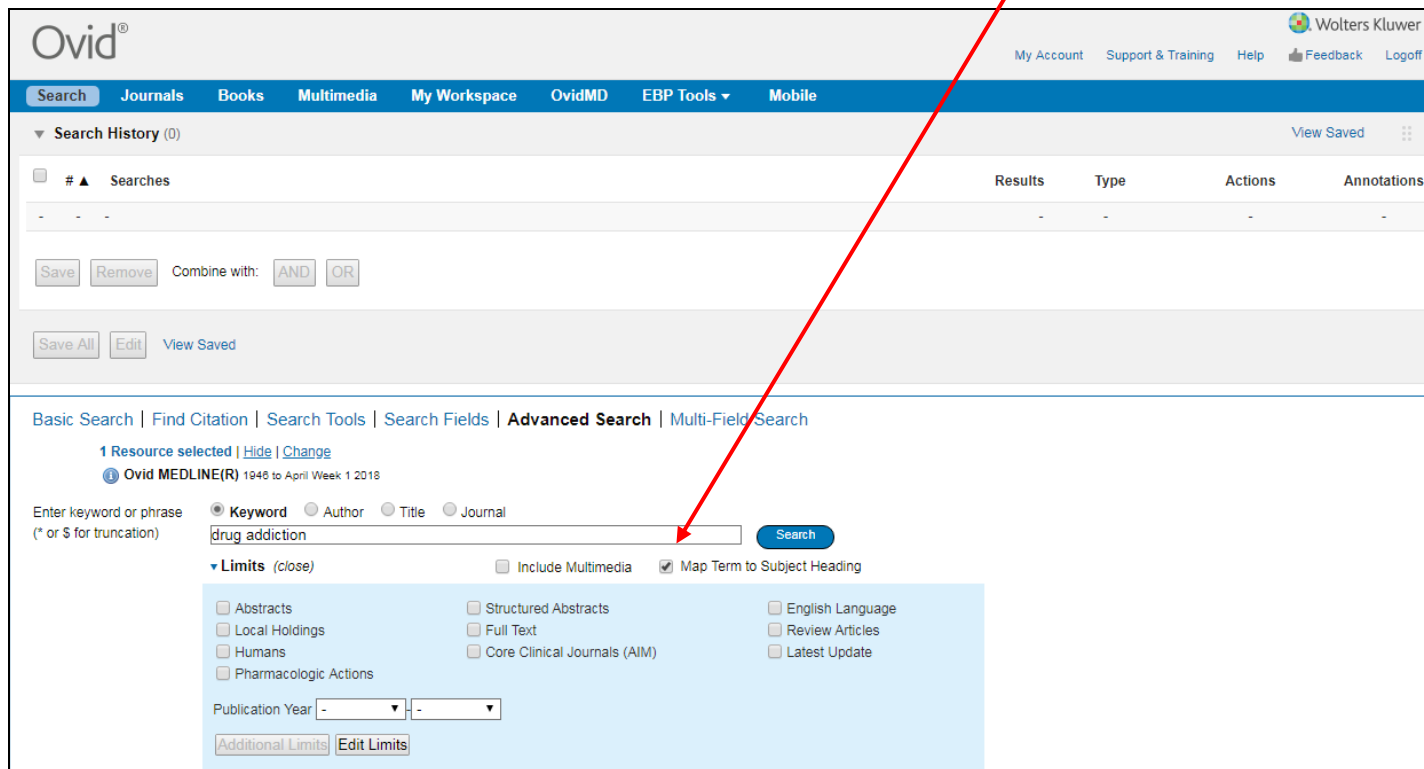
3. Access MEDLINE via Ovid

Open the Library's Website at <http://www.alfredlibrary.org>
Go to the Resources page and click on the **Medline (Ovid)** link.

NB: For University staff and students, access to Medline may also be available via your University Library's website.

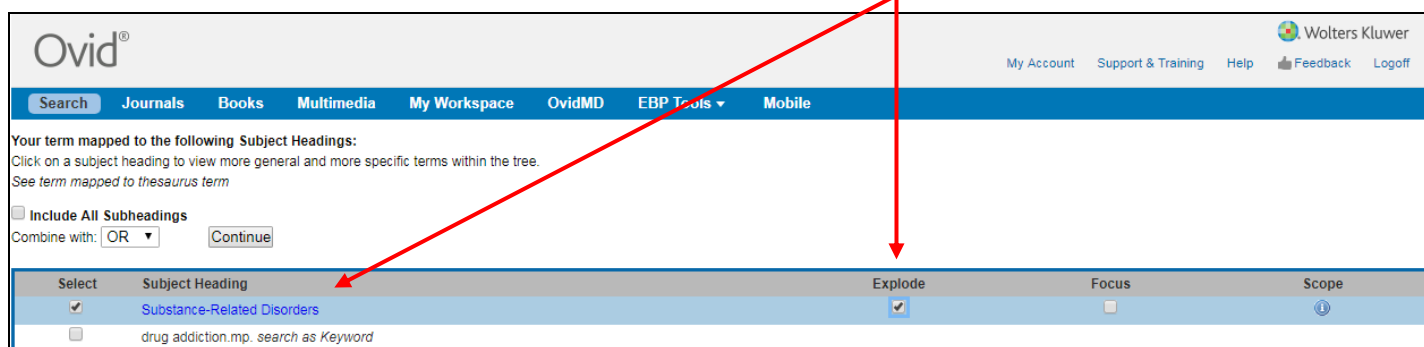
4. Type your first search term (drug addiction) into the search box, then click on the search button.

Notice that the “Map Term To Subject Heading” box is ticked, so you are doing a SUBJECT HEADING search. This will map the term **drug addiction** to the subject headings within the database.



5. Select a subject heading from those suggested and tick the Explode box alongside it.

Note that the system has mapped 'drug addiction' to the preferred subject of Substance-Related Disorders. It is underlined and in blue writing, which denotes it as a subject heading from the thesaurus.



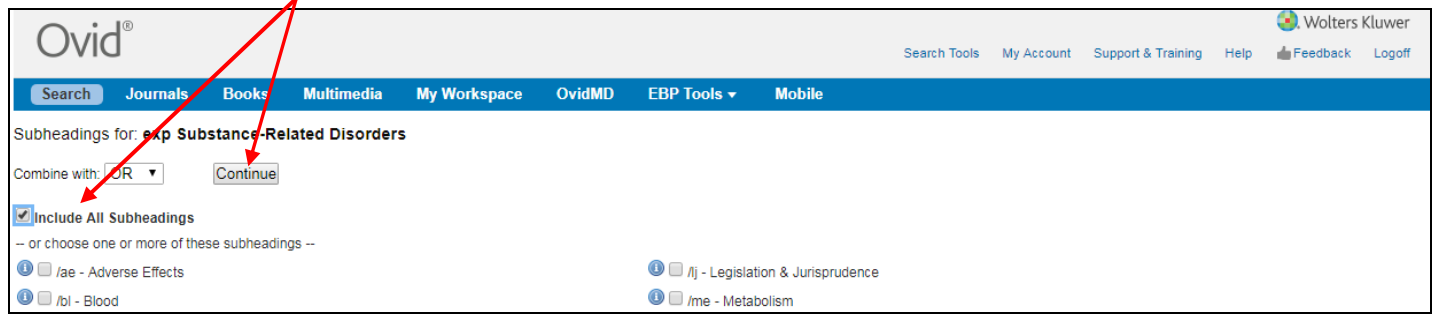
- ❖ The **Explode** option means that you will search on this subject, plus any more specific subject terms from the thesaurus.
- ❖ The **Focus** option allows you to retrieve only those articles where this subject heading is the major focus of the article. If you wish, you can select both Explode and Focus.

6. Click on the **Continue button**

7. Subheading Display.

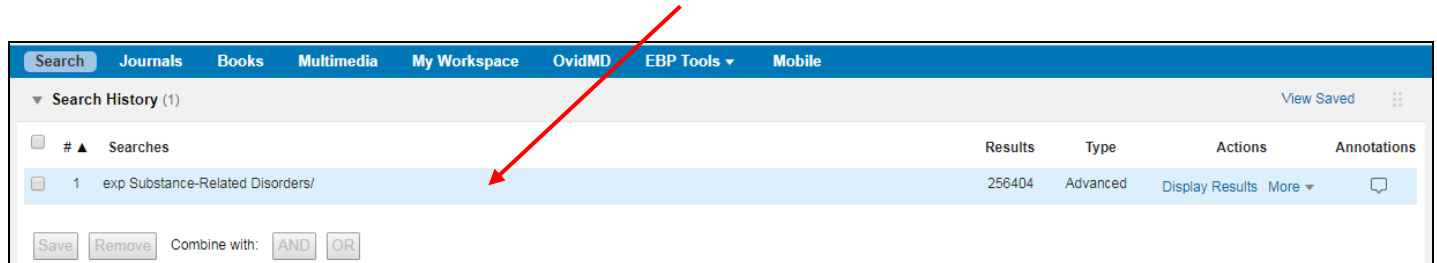
Tick **“Include All Subheadings”** (this is also the default option).

If required, you could select those subheadings that are most appropriate. However, beware of reducing your results too soon. Then, click on the **Continue** button.



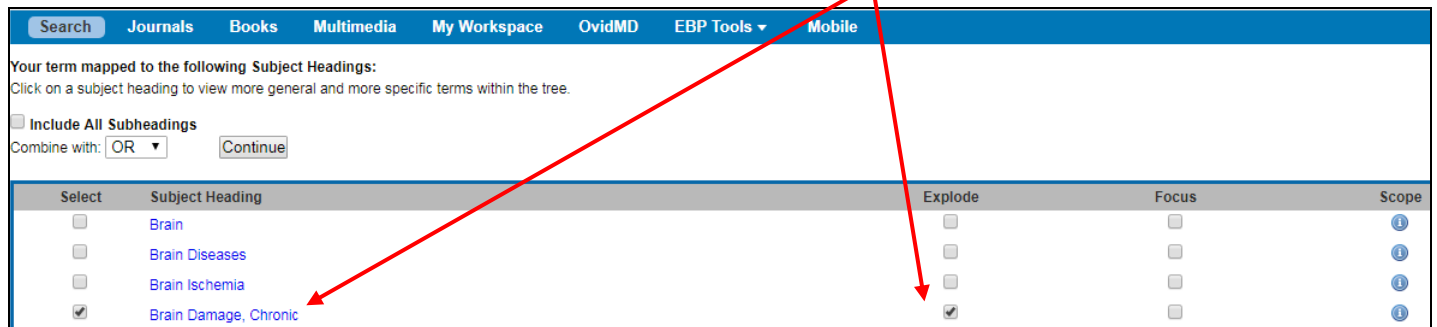
The screenshot shows the Ovid search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Search' highlighted. Below it, a search history entry for 'exp Substance-Related Disorders' is visible. The 'Combine with' dropdown is set to 'OR', and the 'Continue' button is present. A red arrow points to the 'Continue' button. Below the search options, the 'Include All Subheadings' checkbox is checked. A list of subheadings is shown, including '/ae - Adverse Effects', '/bl - Blood', '/lj - Legislation & Jurisprudence', and '/me - Metabolism'. A red arrow points to the 'Include All Subheadings' checkbox.

8. Now you have a set of results for Substance-Related Disorders.



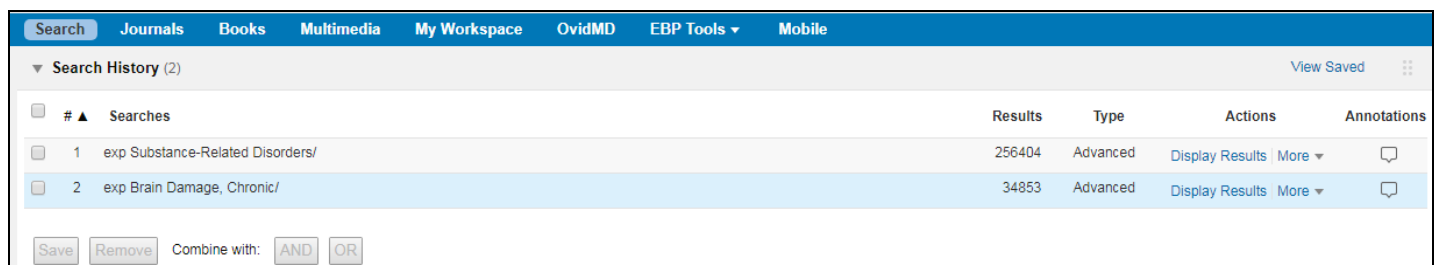
The screenshot shows the Ovid search interface. The 'Search History' section is expanded, showing a single search entry: '1 exp Substance-Related Disorders/' with 256404 results. A red arrow points to this search entry. Below the search history, there are buttons for 'Save', 'Remove', and 'Combine with: AND OR'.

9. You can now enter your next search term (brain damage) into the search box. The system will map the term to the suitable subject heading. If there is no exact match, a list of possible subjects will appear. Select the most appropriate one, in our case it is “Brain Damage, Chronic” and tick the Explode box alongside it.



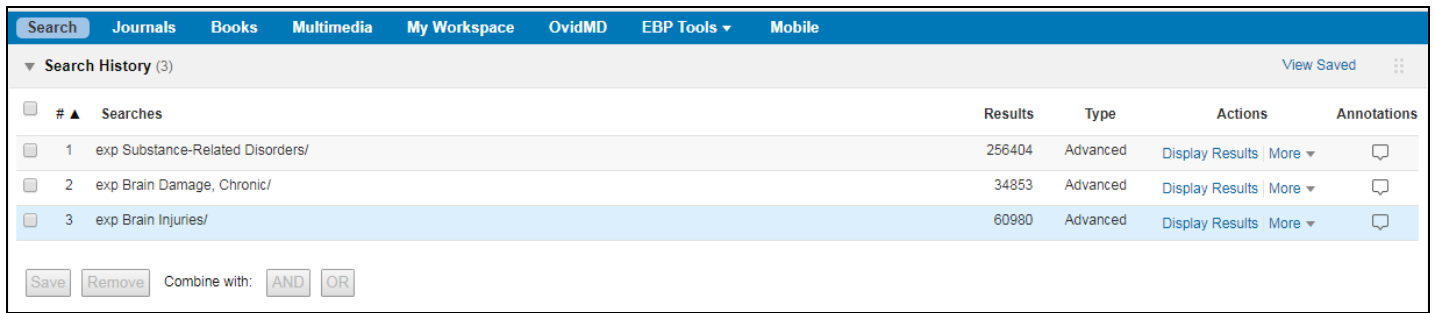
The screenshot shows the Ovid search interface. The 'Your term mapped to the following Subject Headings:' section is visible. Below it, a list of subject headings is shown, including 'Brain', 'Brain Diseases', 'Brain Ischemia', and 'Brain Damage, Chronic'. The 'Brain Damage, Chronic' entry is selected, and the 'Explode' checkbox is checked. A red arrow points to the 'Brain Damage, Chronic' entry, and another red arrow points to the 'Explode' checkbox.

10. Repeat steps 6 and 7. You will then have results for Brain Damage, Chronic added to the Search History.



The screenshot shows the Ovid search interface. The 'Search History' section is expanded, showing two search entries: '1 exp Substance-Related Disorders/' with 256404 results and '2 exp Brain Damage, Chronic/' with 34853 results. A red arrow points to the second search entry. Below the search history, there are buttons for 'Save', 'Remove', and 'Combine with: AND OR'.

11. You can now enter your next search term (brain injuries) into the search box and repeat steps 5 to 7. You will then have results for Brain Injuries added to the Search History.



#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
1	exp Substance-Related Disorders/	256404	Advanced	Display Results More	
2	exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More	
3	exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More	

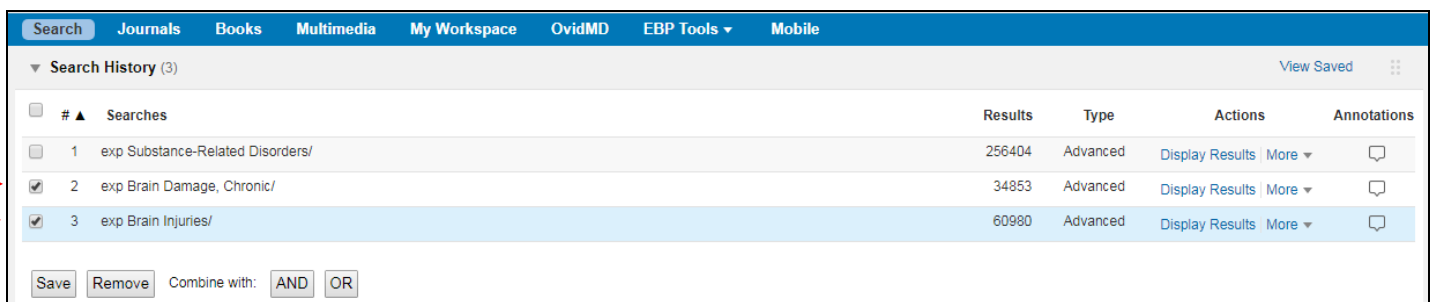
You now have three search sets:

- ❖ Set one for the first concept of Drug Addiction,
- ❖ Sets two and three for the second concept of Brain Damage.

These search sets now need to be combined to obtain your final result.

12. To combine your search sets, please refer to the Search History.

We will first work on the **brain damage** concept as there are two terms for this.



#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
1	exp Substance-Related Disorders/	256404	Advanced	Display Results More	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More	

Select both sets by clicking the boxes in the first column on the left hand side. A tick will appear once selected.

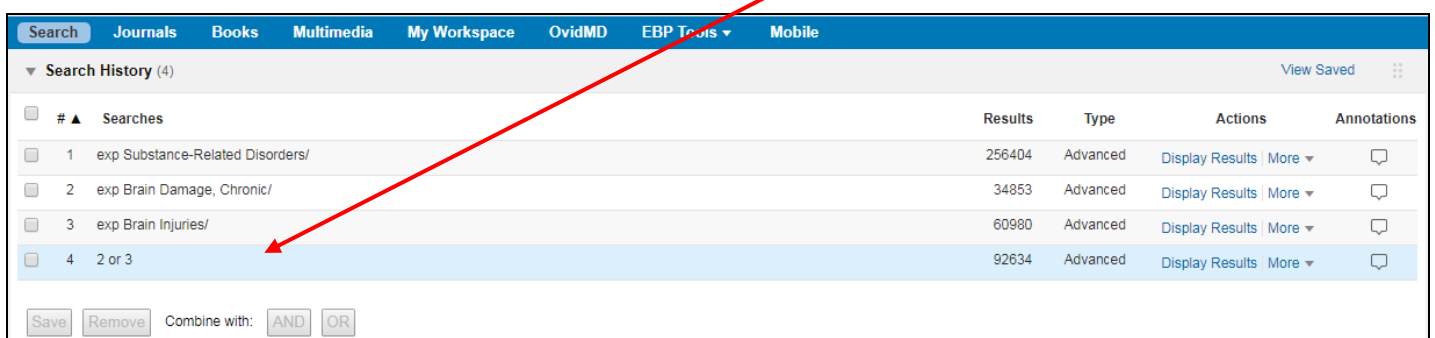


At the bottom of the Search History, you will see:

The OR operator is used when combining alternatives

Click on the button.

This gives you a set of records that contain either “Brain Damage, Chronic” or “Brain Injuries”.



#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
1	exp Substance-Related Disorders/	256404	Advanced	Display Results More	
2	exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More	
3	exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More	
4	2 or 3	92634	Advanced	Display Results More	

13. We can now combine the two concepts together.

#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 exp Substance-Related Disorders/	256404	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 2 or 3	92634	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨

Save Remove Combine with: AND OR

Select the relevant sets by ticking the boxes in the left hand column

At the bottom of the Search History, you will see: Combine with: AND OR

The AND operator is used when putting concepts together.

Click on the AND button.

#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 2 or 3	92634	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5 1 and 4	1376	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨

Expand

This gives you a set of records that will contain both concepts. That is, set number 5 now has results which will include Substance-Related Disorders and (Chronic Brain Damage or Brain Injuries).

Note: The search history defaults to display only 4 sets. To see all the sets in the search history, click on the link to Expand.

14. You can limit the last set in the search history by using the Limits below the search box.

For example, in the following screen we have ticked English Language (1) and selected the years 2010 to current in the publication year boxes (2). After making your selections click on the search button (3) and the limits will be applied to the last set in the search history. In the example below, the limits will be applied to set 5.

Search History (5)

#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 exp Substance-Related Disorders/	256404	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 2 or 3	92634	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5 1 and 4	1376	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗨

Save Remove Combine with: AND OR

Save All Edit Create RSS View Saved

Basic Search | Find Citation | Search Tools | Search Fields | **Advanced Search** | Multi-Field Search

1 Resource selected | Hide | Change

Ovid MEDLINE(R) 1946 to April Week 1 2018

Enter keyword or phrase (* or \$ for truncation)

Keyword Author Title Journal

Search

Limits (close)

Include Multimedia Map Term to Subject Heading

Abstracts Structured Abstracts English Language

Local Holdings Full Text Review Articles

Humans Core Clinical Journals (AIM)

Pharmacologic Actions Latest Update

Publication Year 2010 Current

15. Click on the **Display Results** link next to the results you wish to view.

The first lot of results is **displayed**. The results are in citation format, and any links to full text, complete reference or abstract reference are displayed on the right hand side of the screen.

The screenshot shows a search results interface. On the left, there is a 'Search Information' sidebar with details about the search terms and results. The main area displays two search results. The first result is selected with a checkmark. The second result has a red arrow pointing to the 'Complete Reference' link on its right side.

Note: the Complete Reference is not the Full Text - it is a link to all the fields contained in the record for that reference. These fields include the citation, as well as a list of all the **subject headings** that have been applied to that citation. This can be a useful feature when searching for alternative terms for a concept.

Hint: To display the abstracts on your results page, click on this button (just above your first citation)

A close-up of the search controls bar. It includes buttons for 'All', 'Range', 'Clear', and 'Go', along with a '10 Per Page' dropdown and a '1' input field. A red arrow points to the 'Display Results' button, which is represented by three horizontal lines.

16. To select a citation for printing, saving etc., tick the box next to it.

At the bottom of the page, use the **Next >** and **< Previous** links to go forwards and backwards through the results list.

17. When you've finished selecting your citations, click on the **Keep Selected** link.

This allows you to make a new set in the search history of the results that you selected.

The screenshot shows a search history table with columns for '#', 'Searches', 'Results', 'Type', 'Actions', and 'Annotations'. The last entry, 'from 6 keep 1, 5, 7', is highlighted in blue. A red arrow points to the 'Keep Selected' link in the 'Actions' column of this entry.

18. Output Choices



Output choices, **Print**, **Email**, **Export**, or **+ My Projects (Add to My Projects)** are at the top and bottom of each results page. Choose from the following:

Print:

- **Select Fields to Display:** Choose from preset options or create a custom list
- **Select Citation Style:** Choose from **Ovid Labeled Citation** or choose another style (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.)
- **Include:** Tick **Search History** to include the search history.

Email:

To: type in address.

Add **Subject** title and Message (if required)

Consider also: Select Fields to Display, Select Citation Style, and Include Search History as mentioned above

Export:

- Use **Microsoft® Word** format for word processing
- Use **Citavi/EndNote®/ProCite®/Reference Manager®** for local reference management
- Use **Reprint/Medlars** for importing .txt files into EndNote

My Projects:

My Projects is a research organization area containing projects and folders where you may store searches, text, results, citations, full text, graphics and many other items. **My Projects** also offers the output options (**Print, Email or Export**) and the option to **Remove** (delete) saved items if required.

To use My Projects, you will need to set up an account (see next section on Personal Account).

Select items using the checkboxes and choose the **+ My Projects** link at the top and bottom of each page and follow any prompts. You will need to create a project or select an existing project or folder.

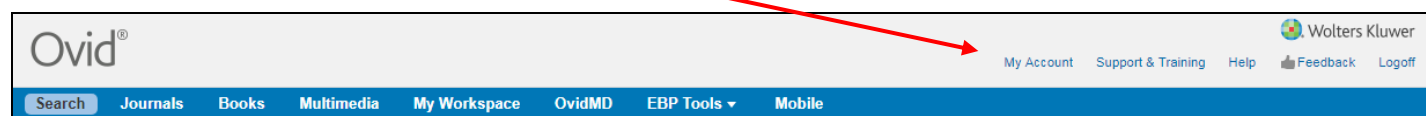
Or click the **My Projects** link next to each individual result or item.



19. Personal Account

A Personal Account provides access to **My Workspace** that contains **My Projects, My Searches & Alerts** and **My eTocs**. Your account also stores your annotations and any interface settings. If you wish to add to, or access any of these areas, you must login with your Personal Account ID and password.

Ovid displays a My Account link on the session



You will need to login to your personal account to access selected functions. Functions which require personal account login are:

- Saved Searches and Alerts
- My Projects
- Annotate items
- Retention of customized displays and settings

Click on the [My Account](#) link to login.

If you haven't created an account yet, you can create one using the "Create Account" link.

Personal Account Login

Personal Account Name:

Password:

[Login](#)

[Forgot Account Name or Password?](#)

Don't have an Account?

Use a Personal Account to save searches, create alerts and manage research.

[Create Account](#)

20. Saved Searches and Alerts

As you develop search strategies, you may want to save them for later use. Ovid lets you store search sets created during any search session, log off and return at a later time without having to retype each search set manually.

Save your searches by clicking the [Save All](#) button at the bottom of the *Search History* window.

▼ Search History (6) [View Saved](#)

#	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
1	exp Substance-Related Disorders/	256404	Advanced	Display Results More	Contract
2	exp Brain Damage, Chronic/	34853	Advanced	Display Results More	
3	exp Brain Injuries/	60980	Advanced	Display Results More	
4	2 or 3	92634	Advanced	Display Results More	
5	1 and 4	1376	Advanced	Display Results More	
6	limit 5 to (english language and yr="2010 -Current")	259	Advanced	Display Results More	

[Save](#) [Remove](#) Combine with: [AND](#) [OR](#)

[Save All](#) [Edit](#) [Create RSS](#) [View Saved](#)

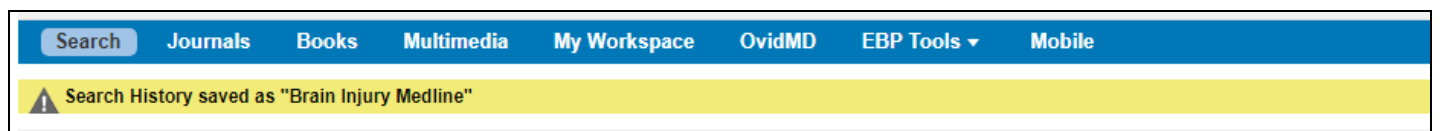
After logging in, fill in the boxes to save your search:

1. Type a search name in the text box. (search name must not exceed 80 characters)
2. Type comments in the text box. (This is OPTIONAL)
3. The default search type is Permanent.
4. Click the Save button.

The different types of saved searches are:

- ◆ **Permanent** - Saves the search for as long as your site maintains a valid subscription. Use this option to save and rerun at another time.
- ◆ **Temporary** - Saves the search for a period of twenty-four hours, then deletes it.
- ◆ **AutoAlert** - Creates a search that runs automatically on a regular basis and emails results to designated recipients.

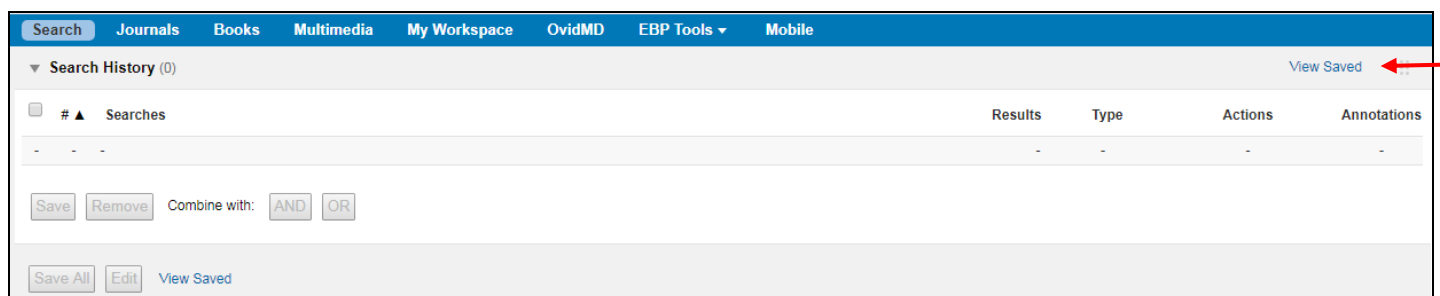
Ovid displays a confirmation message at the top of the Search page once you have saved your search. For example:



21. Accessing Saved Searches

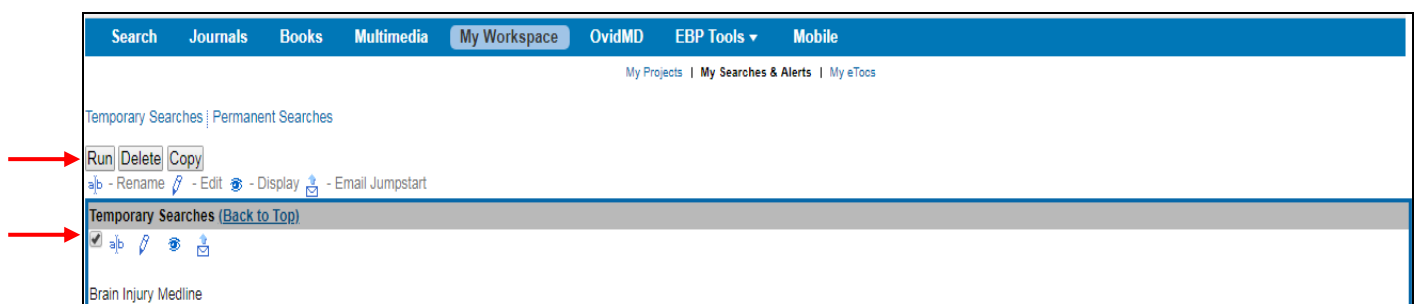
You may view and access your Saved Searches and alerts by clicking on [View Saved](#).

Alternatively you can click on [My Workspace](#). You may need to log in again if you have previously logged off.



When you select either of these options, the system will display all your saved searches organized by search type.

To access your saved search, tick the box next to it and then click on the [Run](#) button.



22. Keyword (Textword) Searching

If your subject heading search does not map to a suitable term, try searching with keywords (also known as textwords). Textword searching lets you search for the exact word or phrase in a chosen field such as title or abstract. It is useful for finding information about a concept that:

- has no appropriate subject heading
- might be very new to the literature
- has a very specific name, such as the GUSTO Trials

❖ Textword field searching

The textword command **.mp.** tells Ovid that you are looking for a textword and therefore bypasses the subject mapping system. The **.mp.** command will look for the word in the title, abstract, and as a subject heading word.

❖ Truncation & Wildcards

Textwords can be truncated to pick up various forms of a word. Truncation is useful if the textword or phrase can be expressed in a variety of ways. Use the asterisk ***** to indicate where the word should be truncated, followed by the **.mp.** command, to indicate that you want to search a textword, not a subject heading.

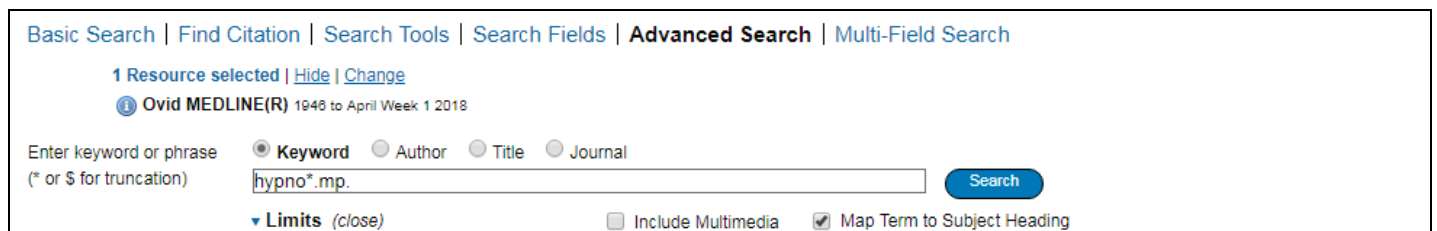
Wildcards can be used to find word/spelling variations.

- Use ***** at the end of a word or part of a word to retrieve unlimited suffix variations eg. disease* for diseases or diseased.
- Use **#** inside or at the end of a word to replace exactly one character eg. wom#n.
- Use **?** inside or at the end of a word to replace zero or one character eg. robot? or flavo?r.

Truncation example:

The following screen shows a textword search for **hypno*.mp.**

This will retrieve words such as hypnosis, hypnotic, hypnotism, hypnotise etc.



The screenshot shows the Ovid MEDLINE(R) search interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Basic Search | Find Citation | Search Tools | Search Fields | **Advanced Search** | Multi-Field Search. Below this, it indicates '1 Resource selected | Hide | Change' and 'Ovid MEDLINE(R) 1946 to April Week 1 2018'. The search input area is titled 'Enter keyword or phrase (* or \$ for truncation)'. There are radio buttons for 'Keyword', 'Author', 'Title', and 'Journal', with 'Keyword' selected. The search term 'hypno*.mp.' is entered in the text box. A blue 'Search' button is to the right. Below the search box, there are options: 'Limits (close)', 'Include Multimedia' (unchecked), and 'Map Term to Subject Heading' (checked).

❖ Title Field

If the textword field option is too broad, that is, too many results are retrieved; you can choose to search for a word in the title field. To perform a Title field search, select the radio button next to Title. Remember to use truncation for word variations.

For example:

The following screen shows a title field search for the truncated word **exercis***.

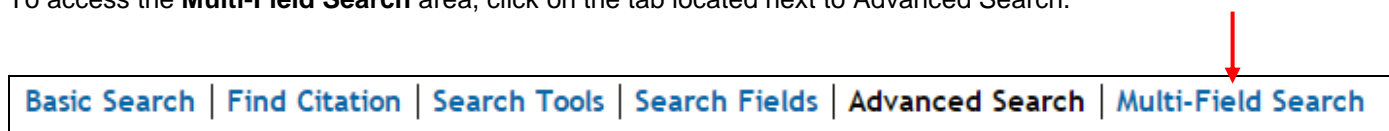
This will retrieve words such as exercise, exercised, exercises, exercising etc. in the title.



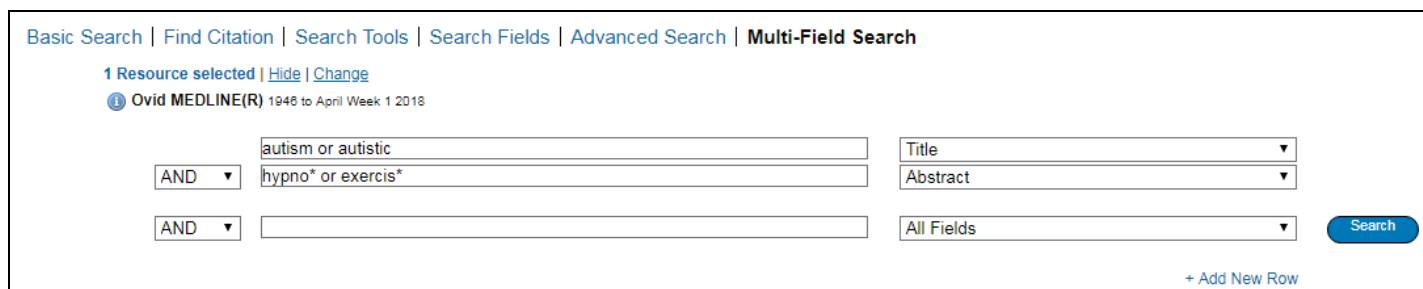
The screenshot shows the Ovid MEDLINE(R) search interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Basic Search | Find Citation | Search Tools | Search Fields | **Advanced Search** | Multi-Field Search. Below this, it indicates '1 Resource selected | Hide | Change' and 'Ovid MEDLINE(R) 1946 to April Week 1 2018'. The search input area is titled 'Enter title word or phrase to search.'. There are radio buttons for 'Keyword', 'Author', 'Title', and 'Journal', with 'Title' selected and circled in red. The search term 'exercis*' is entered in the text box. A blue 'Search' button is to the right. Below the search box, there are options: 'Limits (close)', 'Include Multimedia' (unchecked), and 'Map Term to Subject Heading' (checked).

❖ Multi-Field Search

To access the **Multi-Field Search** area, click on the tab located next to Advanced Search.



You can use **Multi-Field Search** to search multiple terms in specific fields, and combine your terms using your choice of **AND** or **OR** Boolean operators.



Enter a word or phrase in the search box. Select a field to search from the adjacent pull down menu. Search a single term in a specific field, or enter a second or third term to be searched in specific fields in the search boxes provided. Remember to use truncation or wildcard symbols where appropriate.

Please ask a Librarian for any assistance with database searching.

23. Accessing the full text of your citations.

For those citations that do not have a full text link available, you will have to check the library's holdings. There is a listing for the online journals on the library webpage: <http://www.alfredlibrary.org>

For articles that are not held by The Ian Potter Library, a document delivery service may be available. Please check with the library to see what document delivery services are available to you.

For further information please contact the library on 90763042 or library@alfred.org.au

Last Updated Aug 2018