Ovid MEDLINE Searching Flowchart

Step 1 – Main Search Page
Type a word or phrase in the search box.

SUBJECT Search
Map Term to Subject Heading
is checked.

SEARCH

Step 2 - Mapping Display
Select Subject Heading using available checkbox.

Step 3 - Subject Heading
Check the box beside a subject heading to include it in your search.

- Recommended: Click on the Subject Heading to view the "tree" (hierarchy) for broader/narrower terms.
- Recommended: **Scope** - Click on the I to see more information about a term.

Explode (optional)
Check this box to include your term and all of its more specific terms.

Focus (optional)
Check this box to make your term the major point or focus of articles. **NOTE**: May eliminate relevant articles.

Search as Keyword (optional)
Check this box to include your term as a keyword (.mp)

CONTINUE »

Step 4 - Subheading Display
Select appropriate subheadings using the available checkboxes.

OR

Step 4 - Include All Subheadings
Check this box to search all of the subheadings available for a term.

CONTINUE »

CONTINUE »

KEYWORD Search
Map Term to Subject Heading
is NOT checked.

Truncation (optional)
Use a $ after a word stem to account for word variations.
Ex. colon$

Boolean OR
Use OR when you have specific variations of a term in mind. Use parentheses around OR statements.
Ex. (colon OR colons OR colonic)

Boolean AND
Use AND to combine different concepts. You can type your entire strategy at one time.
Ex. colon AND biopsy AND perforation

SEARCH

Search Results

Step 5 - Return to Step 1
Repeat the process for each term in your strategy. Recommended: If subject headings are not quite right for a topic, try a KEYWORD Search.

Step 2 - Return to Step 1
Repeat the process for each term in your strategy. Recommended: If results are too unfocused, try a SUBJECT Search.

Final Step - Once you have created a search set for each of your terms, use the set numbers to combine the sets to create your final search strategy. **Ex**. 1 AND 2 AND (3 OR 4)