PubMed
PubMed provides access to bibliographic information, including MEDLINE. Developed by the National Library of Medicine, an agency of the National Institutes of Health, PubMed provides access to over 18 million citations from the 1950s to the present. Not all citations are available in full text.

Searching
PubMed has a straight-forward interface. You simply type in the terms you are interested in researching.

For instance, if you were interested in hay fever causes, you simply type in hay fever causes in the search box and click “Go”.

You will be taken to a list of the results. In this case there are over 5,000 citations returned.
If you are wondering what PubMed actually searched for, click on the “Details” tab at the top of the page.

As you can see, PubMed took the terms you entered and converted them into terms from MeSH.* The addition of many terms from MeSH led to so many results. If you are looking to narrow your search, you may want to consider using the Advanced Search function or creating searches using the MeSH database.

* Much like Library of Congress Subject Headings but developed by the National Library of Medicine.
Advanced Search

PubMed’s advanced search allows you to search using simple terms like the initial search, but also allows you to limit your search.† You can limit your search by publication, topics, language or fields.

There are many limiters for you to choose from, including articles about humans or animals, clinical trials, ages involved in the article and many more. However, your original search terms do not change, so if you are unhappy with how PubMed interpreted your terms, you will need to change your search terms.

Using the MeSH database

The MeSH database allows you to refine your search to the exact terms you are interested in. If you look at the search above, you’ll see that PubMed interpreted “hayfever” as “rhinitis, allergic, seasonal,” (“rhinitis” AND "allergic" AND "seasonal") or "seasonal allergic rhinitis" or "hayfever," leading to so many returns. While you may want to have a large number of results to choose from, 5,000 are too many.

† The Advanced Search is still in Beta, so there may be changes to display and functionality.
To choose the MeSH you would like to use, click on the MeSH Database link in the left panel.

Using the same interface, you can type in the term you are looking for. If you are looking for more than one term, you will need to conduct a MeSH search for each term. The following instructions will take you through that process.

In this case, search for “hayfever.”

As you can see from the results, hayfever is not a simple term to study. You can further limit the search to specific subheadings, to major topics only and to only the term chosen.
Since the search also needs to be limited to the causes of hayfever, mark the record, then click on the “Send to” drop down at the top of the page. From the drop down choose “Search box with AND.”

To search for the next phrase, click “Clear” near the search box, and type in “causes.” In this case, three terms are returned.

Causality most closely fits the definition of “causes.” Mark the record, and from the “Send to” drop down choose “Search Box with AND.” Notice the search box is now populated with both MeSH terms selected. Click on “Search PubMed” to conduct the search. This time the search returned 300 citations.

Results
Since not every citation in PubMed is available from the database, it is important to be able to discern what is and what is not available. If an article is available, there will be a link indicating such.

To see the full citation information, click on the link created by the authors’ name. You will see whatever information is available, as well as additional information created by PubMed, such as related articles. If you are looking at the full record, you will see a link on the right side directing you to the full text.

PubMed is not compatible with the “Find It” tool, so to see if the library subscribes to a particular journal, use the “E-Journal Finder” tool located in the left pane of the library’s
website. From there you can determine if the article is available in full text through the library or if you will need to order the article through ILL.

Clinical Queries
It is also possible to search PubMed for clinical studies using the Clinical Queries link. Choose the categories you are interested in. You can be as specific or broad as you need.

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<th>PubMed Clinical Queries</th>
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<td>This page provides the following specialized PubMed searches for clinicians:</td>
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<td>* Search by Clinical Study Category</td>
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<td>* Find Systematic Reviews</td>
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<td>* Medical Genetics searches</td>
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<td>after running one of these searches, you may further refine your results using PubMed's Limits feature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results of searches on these pages are limited to specific clinical research areas. For comprehensive searches, use PubMed directly.</td>
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![PubMed Clinical Queries Table](image)

The results page will indicate if there are any searches fitting your parameters as well as any related articles available.