

Comparison of Medline (via Ovid interface) and PubMed

Ovid Medline Advantages

- Better mapping of search terms to MeSH; using MeSH usually results in more relevant results
- Better user control with fewer automated functions, e.g., *Explode*
- Same interface as *Compendex*, *Evidence Based Medicine Reviews*, *INSPEC*, *PsycINFO*, etc.
- Search history (results sets) displayed on main page for easy combination and modification
- *Clinical Queries* offers a third, optimized filter called “best balance of sensitivity and specificity” (in addition to broad and narrow options, which are the only two available in PubMed)
- *Results Tools* allow easy printing, emailing, saving or exporting of results
- Search History can be included in an email or printout of results
- Results can easily be emailed to multiple addresses
- Saving search results to *RefWorks* can be done by *Direct Export* (the quickest, easiest option)
- Higher number of searchable fields
- A few more limits are available

PubMed Advantages

- Free access to all via the Web; not dependent on a subscription to Ovid
- *Related Articles* link often works well, allowing user to build search from “one really good article”
- *Clinical Queries* simultaneously searches Clinical Study Categories, Systematic Reviews, and Medical Genetics and displays the top five results for each on the same page
- *Find related data* on results list pages searches your choice of 30+ resources, e.g., Genome, Nucleotide, SNP and Protein. This is probably most useful after moving selected articles to the Clipboard. Descriptions appear when a resource is selected from the drop down menu.
- A few months more current; records not yet indexed are retrieved due to default addition of keyword searching
- Contains more records; citations which are outside the scope of Medline

Ovid Medline Disadvantages

- May not be available in one’s workplace
- Boolean searches, e.g. x AND y , default to keyword searching and that usually results in inferior retrieval as opposed to mapping each term/phrase to MeSH

PubMed Disadvantages

- Automatic term mapping is not as effective as Ovid’s mapping, for either words or phrases
- Many useful options are hidden behind links, e.g. adding subheadings and restricting to MeSH Major Topic
- *Filters* (limits) remain active for subsequent searches unless they are deselected
- Results must be saved as a text file before importing to *RefWorks*
- Search History cannot be included with results in email or print