

PubMed: search, save, and manage results

Use the PubMed link from the Library [list of databases](#); this will enable the display of full text links for Library-subscribed items. Change *Display Options* from *Summary* to *Abstract* to activate this feature.

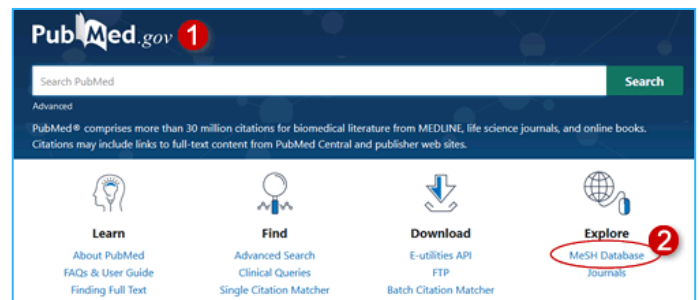
Use this Fact Sheet if PubMed is your primary database.

Search using thesaurus when possible

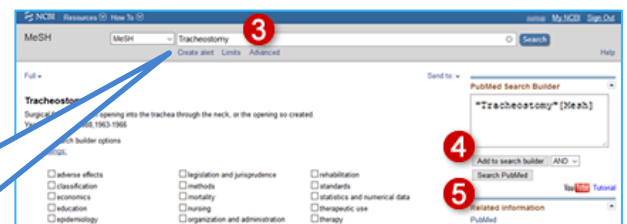
Sample search

How do you manage postoperative complications in children undergoing tracheostomy?

1. On the PubMed home page
2. Select *MeSH Database* from the *Explore* menu.

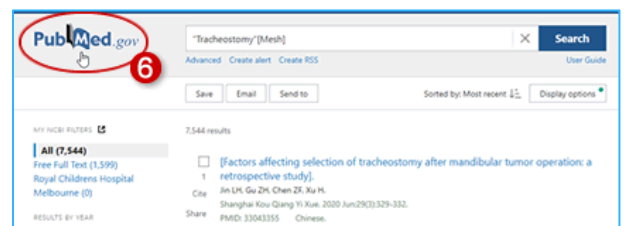


3. Enter your first search term *tracheostomy* and hit *Search*.
4. Select *Add to search builder* to add the term to the search box.
5. Select *Search PubMed* to display results.



Tip: Search terms are not case sensitive except for Boolean operators.

6. Click the PubMed.gov logo and return to the MeSH database as in Step 1.
7. Repeat steps 1-6 using *postoperative care* as your search term.



This time, select the subheadings *adverse effects*, *methods*, and *nursing* when the tree displays before adding to search builder.



8. Repeat steps 1-6 using "postoperative complications" as your search term.
9. Select *Advanced* (below the search field) to view your search history.

Search	Actions	Details	Query	Results	Time
#3	...	>	Search: "Postoperative Complications"[Mesh] Sort by: Most Recent	606,858	00:07:54
#2	...	>	Search: ("Postoperative Care/adverse effects"[Mesh] OR "Postoperative Care/methods"[Mesh] OR "Postoperative Care/nursing"[Mesh]) Sort by: Most Recent	12,885	00:07:10
#1	...	>	Search: "Tracheostomy"[Mesh] Sort by: Most Recent	8,707	00:06:37

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Search using keywords when there are no relevant thesaurus terms or to increase the sensitivity of your search

Begin at the PubMed home page. Search the *Title/Abstract* fields using *[tiab]*. Consider synonyms and word variants.

For example:

- tracheostom*[tiab]*
- postoperative-complication*[tiab] OR post-operative-complication*[tiab] OR postoperative-care[tiab] OR post-operative-care[tiab] OR postsurgical-care[tiab] OR post-surgical-care[tiab]*

History and Search Details					Download	Delete
Search	Actions	Details	Query	Results	Time	
#5	...	>	Search: <i>postoperative-complication*[tiab] OR post-operative-complication*[tiab] OR postoperative-care[tiab] OR post-operative-care[tiab] OR postsurgical-care[tiab] OR post-surgical-care[tiab]</i>	108,024	00:16:08	
#4	...	>	Search: <i>tracheostom*[tiab]</i>	17,392	00:15:26	

Phrase searching

- Enclose search terms in double quotes to find the exact phrase.
- Using double quotes will bypass PubMed's Automatic term Mapping (ATM) – see our tip on the Library website: [Refining your PubMed results when doing keyword searches](#).
- Truncation (*) can be applied.

Truncation

- Use the asterisk * for truncation to substitute 0 or more characters.
- Terms must have at least 4 characters before applying the asterisk: *colo**
- Multiple wildcards can be used in the same term and applied in the middle of a word: *organi*ation**

The asterisk* can be used in a phrase in the following ways:

- In a phrase:** *"breast feed*" OR "tumo*r associated macrophage"*
- Using a hyphen:** *breast-feed* OR tumo*r-associated-macrophage**
- Using field tags:** *breast feed*[tiab] OR tumo*r-associated-macrophage*[tiab]*

Proximity searching

Format: *"search terms"[field:~N]*

- Search terms* = two or more words enclosed in double quotes.
- Field* = the search field tag for the Title or Title/Abstract fields. Use *[Title]* and *[Title/Abstract]* or the abbreviated *[ti]* and *[tiab]*.
- ~N* = the maximum number of words appearing between the search terms. The larger the N value the broader the search (retrieves more results).
- If *N=0* search terms will appear next to each other in any order with no word in between.
- Use a phrase search instead of a proximity search if you wish to retrieve the exact phrase with terms appearing in a specific order.
- Truncation (*) is disallowed. If truncation is applied the proximity operator is ignored.
- Boolean operators and [stopwords](#) included in the quoted terms for proximity are treated like regular keywords.

Example of proximity searching in the Title/Abstract [tiab] fields:

"postoperative complications"[tiab: ~3]

Will find:

*postoperative complications
postoperative pulmonary complications
complications in the postoperative*

Will not find:

complications that appear postoperatively

More tips on proximity searching

See a [5-minute video tutorial](#) or the [PubMed User Guide](#)

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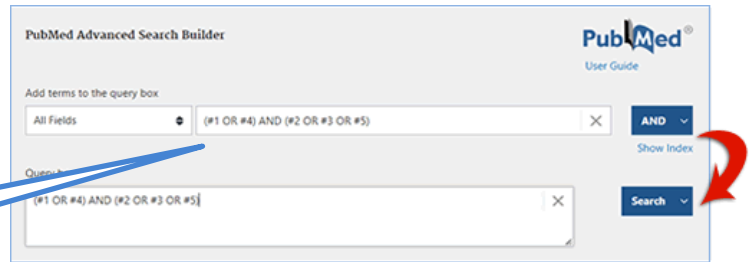
Manage your search results

Combine search lines

Use the appropriate Boolean operators to combine your search lines.

1. Use parentheses () to nest terms.
2. Select *Add*, then *Search*.

Tip: *Boolean Operators (AND/OR) must be in upper case.*



Limit your search

The limit options are in the navigation panel on the left of your search results.

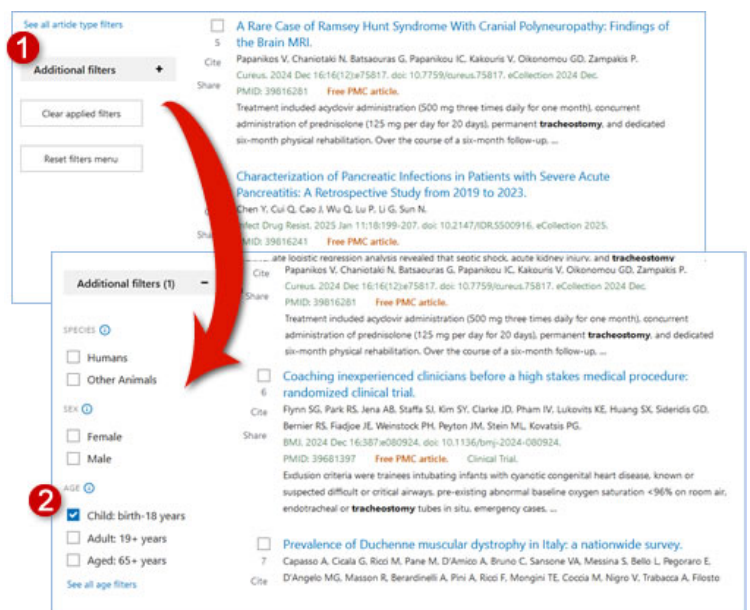
To display age limits:

1. Expand *Additional filters*
2. Go to *Age* and select the age group to limit your search, for example: *Child: birth-18 years*.
3. The limit is now applied.

Do not use this limit for a Systematic or Scoping Review.

Once a limit has been applied it remains for the rest of the session.

Use *Clear applied filters* from the navigation panel or *Clear all* at the top of the page to remove the limits.

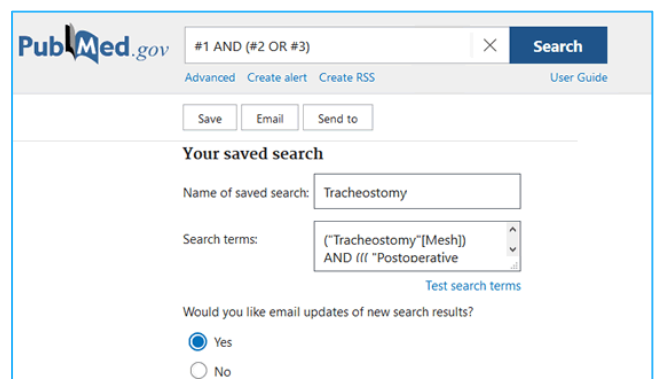


Save your search

On the results page, go to *Create alert*. Log into your account if you haven't already done so. Check that the correct search name is in the *Name of saved search* field.

The default is to receive emailed alerts; change this option to *No* to save the search but not receive alerts.

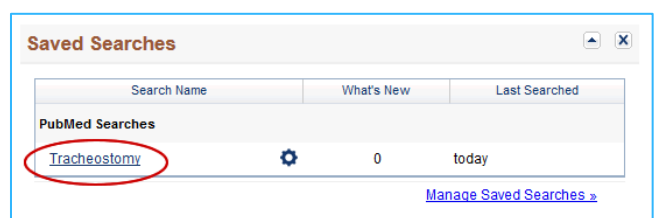
If email updates are required enter your email address and choose your preferred delivery options.



Manage your saved search

Your saved searches will be listed under your account name.

Go to the *Dashboard* and select the saved search to run.



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Manage your search results

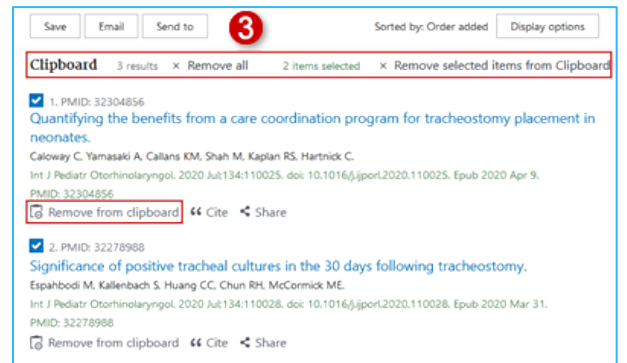
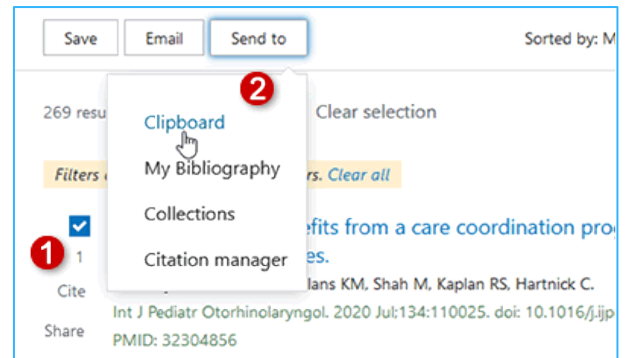
The PubMed *Clipboard* feature allows you to temporarily save and collect selected citations from your search results.

1. Select relevant references.
2. Go to *Send to*, then select *Clipboard*. Specify a selection or select *All results*. If you select *All results*, the first 500 results are added. You can continue to add references to the *Clipboard* at any time in the current session.
3. On the *Clipboard* page, use the check boxes to select items to be saved, emailed, or removed from the *Clipboard*.

The *Clipboard* can store up to a maximum of 500 citations at a time and will expire after 8 hours of inactivity.

Use the *E-mail* option to send via email.

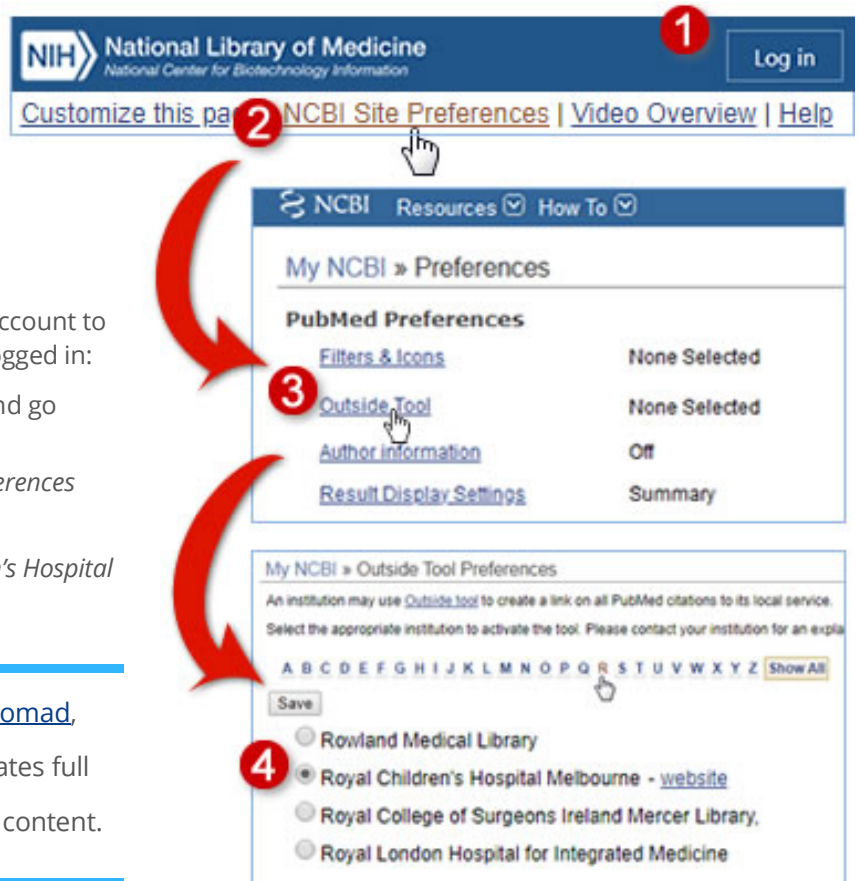
Use *Send to/Citation Manager* to export to EndNote (see [Fact sheet 12: Importing into EndNote](#)).



Customise PubMed to see Library-subscribed full text content

Choose your preferred method:

- Use the [customised PubMed link](#) on our list of [databases](#) to automatically see “Find it @ RCH” full text links when viewing article abstracts,
- or
- Configure your *MyNCBI* account to see full text links when logged in:
 1. Log in at PubMed and go to your *Dashboard*
 2. Select *NCBI Site Preferences*
 3. Select *Outside Tool*
 4. Select *Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne*

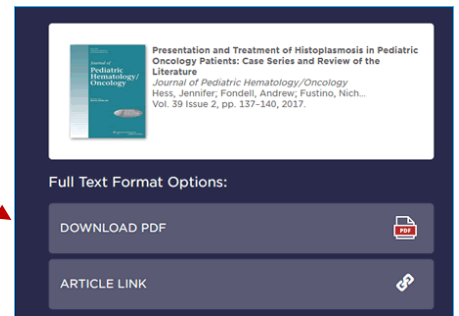


Consider also using [LibKey Nomad](#), a browser extension that locates full text from Library-subscribed content.

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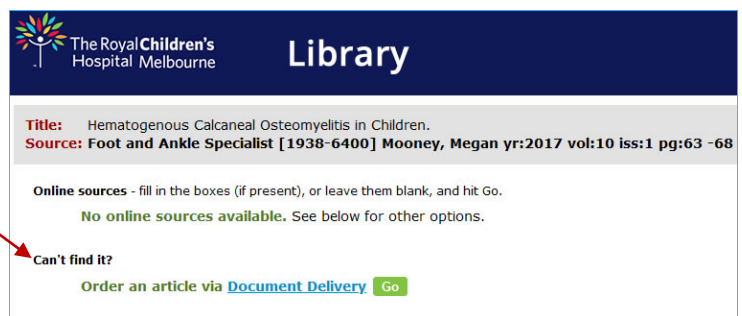
Linking to full text may fail for very recent articles, particularly Epub ahead of print.

If this occurs, use our [journals database](#) to locate the journal.



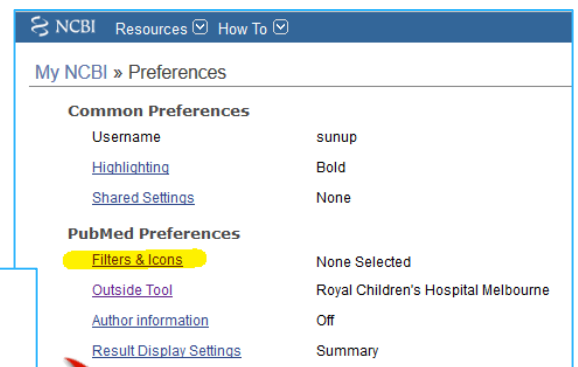
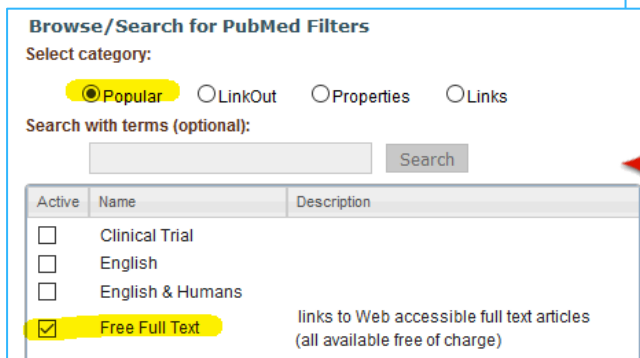
Tip: Use the *find it @ RCH* link to get full text ...

... or use *Document Delivery* to order your article if no online or print sources are found.



Display free full text

1. Select your account icon then go to *Account settings/NCBI Site Preferences*.
2. Under *NCBI Preferences* go to *Filters & Icons*.
3. Choose *Popular* from *Select category*.
4. Select *Free Full Text*.



Additional resources

- ➔ See all [PubMed search tips](#) on the Library website
- ➔ National Library of Medicine's [PubMed Tutorials](#)
- ➔ [PubMed FAQs](#)
- ➔ Contact the Library, 9345 5107, or poh.chua@rch.org.au