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Literature Review Handout: A Simple Literature Search for Health Sciences

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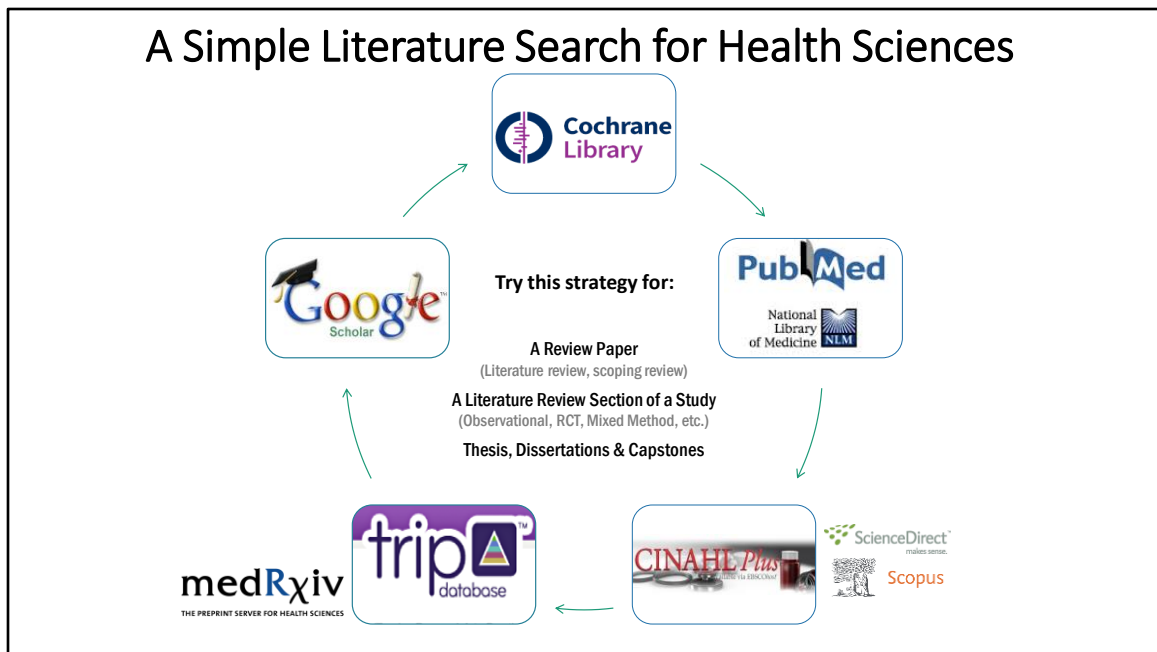


Literature Review
Handout

**A Simple Literature Search
for Health Sciences**

University of the Pacific

A Simple Literature Search for Health Sciences



A Simple Literature Search for Health Sciences

Easy steps for a simple, yet exhaustive literature search using both indexing and abstracting databases:

- 1) First, check: **Cochrane** for systematic reviews. Backsearch references in a systematic review to discover other articles to read.
- 2) **Pubmed** for RCTs/Clinical Trials and other systematic reviews/scoping reviews. Click “MeSH Database” to select subheadings in your topic and search just those trees in the PubMed database. Don’t forget to click “Add to search builder” and “Search PubMed” to initiate the search.
- 3) **CINAHL** targeted to specific studies and queries. You could also add searches in ScienceDirect and SCOPUS for additional articles in both health and STEM.
- 4) **TRIP** – everything health and allied health internationally, including some grey literature like government documents and non-government health organization websites (i.e. ADA, AHA, AARP, WHO, and many other official agencies). Add a search in medRxiv.org to find the newest pre-print articles in your topic.
- 5) Last, **Google Scholar** – a catch-all and last chance to find something and to investigate the gaps more fully by using Boolean search strings. By now, you should recognize articles from the other databases you searched and are more in tune with the search to weed out the thousands of extra results.

- 6) If you discover more key terms in the process, start the cycle of searching again.
- 7) Remember to backsearch the references of key papers that you download. Just copy and paste the title of the article into Google Scholar to find it. If an article is not available, request an Interlibrary Loan through PacificILL on the library website.



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