**Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) : A Thasurus**

PubMed® is a free online health and biomedical information database developed and maintained by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), at the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM), located at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The main component of PubMed is MEDLINE, a database which indexes articles and other documents from across 5,600 worldwide publications. Its subject coverage is biomedicine and health, along with portions of behavioral sciences, bioengineering, chemical sciences and life sciences.

**Types of Resources**: Most of these publications are academic journals; a small number are newspapers, magazines and newsletters. PubMed also provides access to online books, websites and molecular biology resources.

**Period Covered**: Date coverage is generally 1946 to present, with some older material provided.

**Searching PubMed**

The PubMed facilitates the following types of searches:

1. **Basic**: Type a word or phrase into the query box (e.g., a subject, author and/or journal). Then click on the Search button or press the Enter key.
2. **Advanced**: The advanced search in PubMed is facilitated by an Advance Search Builder where in the users can build their search statements by combining various fields using the Boolean operators AND, OR and NOT. The fields that can be combined with the Boolean operators include Author, Title, Source type, ISBN (in case of book), Publisher, Abstract and Keywords.
3. **Searching by Medical Subject Heading (MeSH)**

While indexing the journal articles for MEDLINE database, the indexing personnel read all the articles and assign them relevant subject heading or keywords by using a controlled vocabulary (thesaurus) called Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). It is beneficial to search the PubMed using MeSH terms rather than entering multiple “key words”. For example, you can select a single MeSH term such as neoplasms, and PubMed will automatically search for the synonymous terms like cancers and tumours as well. You can also identify a MeSH term in relation to broader/narrower terms to help you find either more or fewer results e.g. ‘Eczema’ is listed within terms for ‘Dermatitis’; ‘Dermatis’ is listed within ‘Skin diseases’.

To search using MeSH term:

1. Select MeSH from the drop-down menu next to the PubMed search box.
2. Type a word or phrase and click ‘Search’.
3. Then, tick the relevant MeSH term(s).
4. Finally, click ‘add to search builder’ and ‘search PubMed’.