

CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature) is a major database indexing articles and documents in nursing and allied health literature. Subjects covered include consumer health, biomedicine, behavioral sciences, and education.

Searching CINAHL

Access CINAHL by going to the **Find Articles** tab on the Library's web page and clicking on **By TITLE** under "Databases." Enter a keyword or phrase and click **Search**. Use the **Limit Your Results** area to limit your search to full-text, peer-reviewed, publication year, age groups, clinical queries, and many other options.

Notice the **Suggest Subject Terms** box is checked. When this box is checked, clicking **Search** will cause the CINAHL Headings display page to appear (see below). This will list **subject headings** in the database related to that keyword or phrase. To go *directly* to your search results after clicking **Search**, make sure the **Suggest Terms** box is not checked.

CINAHL Headings | [View Tutorials](#)

Results For: dementia | Subheadings for: Dementia | [Search Database](#)

Check box to view subheadings. |
 Click linked term for tree view.

Search Term	Explode (+)	Major Concept
Dementia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blood/BL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concepts/Concepts/CF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Using the Subject Headings Display Page

- Click on a **Subject Heading** to view its thesaurus—related terms that are more general and more specific.
- Select the **Explode** box if you wish to retrieve results using the selected term and all of its more specific terms.
- Select the **Major Concept** box to find only records where the subject heading is the major topic of the article.
- If your search did not map to a desirable subject heading, select the box **Search as Keyword**.
- If you select more than one term, you can combine them using a Boolean operator (AND or OR).

Selecting Subheadings

Subheadings can be used to restrict the focus of your search. Adding subheadings will result in fewer but more specific search results. This is a great way to narrow down a search.

The screenshot shows a search interface with a 'Search Database' button and a list of subheadings for 'Dementia'. A callout box explains: 'To choose one or more subheadings to add to your search, checkmark the box beside the subheading, combine the selections using AND or OR and click Search Database. Click the **Scope** link to find out more information on a subheading.'

The subheading list includes: Blood/BL, Cerebrospinal Fluid/CF, Chemically Induced/CI, Classification/CL, Complications/CO, **Diagnosis/DI**, Diet Therapy/DH, Drug Therapy/DT, Economics/EC, **Education/ED**, Embryology/EM, Epidemiology/EP, Ethical Issues/EI, and others.

The search term 'Dementia /DI/ED' is shown with 'Explosive (+)' and 'Major Concept' options.

Viewing Your Search Results

Your search results will display with a list of records as shown below. By clicking on the title of an article, you can view the abstract and complete reference for the article, check for full-text, and email, save, or print the record.

The screenshot shows search results for 'Abstracts... Spring Scientific Meeting Liverpool - 4 - 6 April 2011'. A callout box says: 'Hold your mouse over the **Magnifying Glass** icon to view the article's abstract (an **abstract** is a brief statement or comprehensive digest of the research and findings).'

Below the first result, a callout box explains: 'The full-text of some articles will be available in CINAHL, but most will be available through one or more of the University's electronic databases. Click on **Links @ Pitt-UPMC** and follow the directions to see if the full-text of the article can be accessed. Need help finding the full-text of an article? **Ask a librarian.**'

A second callout box explains: 'To the left of the search results, you will see a box labeled **Refine your results**. This will allow you to narrow the records retrieved by type (periodicals, pamphlets, etc.), subject, age, or gender. This is a good way to find more specific results.'

The 'Refine your results' box shows options for 'Linked Full Text', 'References Available', and 'Abstract Available', along with a 'Publication Date' range from 1981 to 2011 and 'Source Types' like 'All Results', 'Academic Journals', 'Periodicals', 'Books', and 'Pamphlets'.


Search History

The Search History, which appears above the search results screen, allows you to keep track of the searches you've performed, return to a previous search, and combine searches to reduce the number of search results. Click **View Results** beside the search you want see again. Click **Combine Searches** to choose the searches you want to combine and run the new search.

Search History/Alerts			
Print Search History Retrieve Searches Retrieve Alerts Save Searches / Alerts			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Select / deselect all		<input type="button" value="Search with AND"/>	<input type="button" value="Search with OR"/>
		<input type="button" value="Delete Searches"/>	<input type="button" value="Refresh Search Results"/>
Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S2	"dementia"	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	View Results (21007) View Details Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S1	(MH "Dementia/DI/ED")	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	View Results (2386) View Details Edit

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Developing Good Searching Skills

Most electronic research databases work on the same basic principles to search for and retrieve information. By learning just a few searching tips, you will have a head start on finding the information you need in CINAHL and most research databases, library catalogs, and free web search engines.

Searching Tips

In keyword searching, you can use special operators to combine search terms and broaden or narrow your search.

Operator	Search Example	Finds Records Containing
AND	dementia and nursing	Finds records containing both dementia and nursing
OR	hospital or clinic	Finds records containing either hospital or clinic
NOT	drugs not prescription	Finds records containing drugs but not prescription. Use carefully because not eliminates records containing both terms
NEAR	art near therapy	Finds records containing art and therapy in same sentence
WITH	hospitals and nurses	Finds records containing hospitals and nurses in the same field

Broaden your search by using *truncation*. In the keyword search box, type a word root and immediately follow it with a *. For example, the search term "child*" retrieves records containing child, child's, children, childbirth, childcare, etc.

If you have questions about using CINAHL or any other research databases, finding information, or general research questions, please ask a librarian or call the reference desk at x7295.