Search Tips

Using AND and OR

Use OR for synonyms
Combine synonyms using the connector OR.

For example:
physiotherapy OR physical therapy

Use AND to combine
Combine different concepts using the connector AND.

For example:
physical therapy AND hip replacement surgery

Combine OR and AND like this:
(physiotherapy OR physical therapy) AND hip replacement surgery

Not getting enough results?

Use OR to add synonyms
Add alternate terms to your search using the connector OR.

For example:
exercise OR swimming OR jogging OR walking

Try broader terms
If your terms are very specific and you’re not getting enough results, try including broader terms.

For example:
Instead of equine-assisted therapy, try animal assisted therapy or physical therapy modalities.

Truncation (for most databases but use with caution in PubMed)
Try using the truncation character (an asterisk: * in most databases) to get more results.

For example:
prevent* will find prevent, prevents, prevention, prevented

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Getting too many results?

Use AND to add other concepts
Combine different concepts of your research question using the connector AND.

For example:
physical therapy AND hip replacement surgery AND quality of life

Try narrower terms
If your terms are broad and you’re getting too many results, try searching with narrower terms.

For example:
Instead of exercise, try muscle stretching exercises, resistance training, running, swimming, or warm-up exercise.

Quotation Marks
Use quotation marks to search an exact phrase.

For example:
(physiotherapy OR “physical therapy”) AND “hip replacement surgery”