How To Locate Research Articles Using PubMed

International **Transplant Nurses** Society

By
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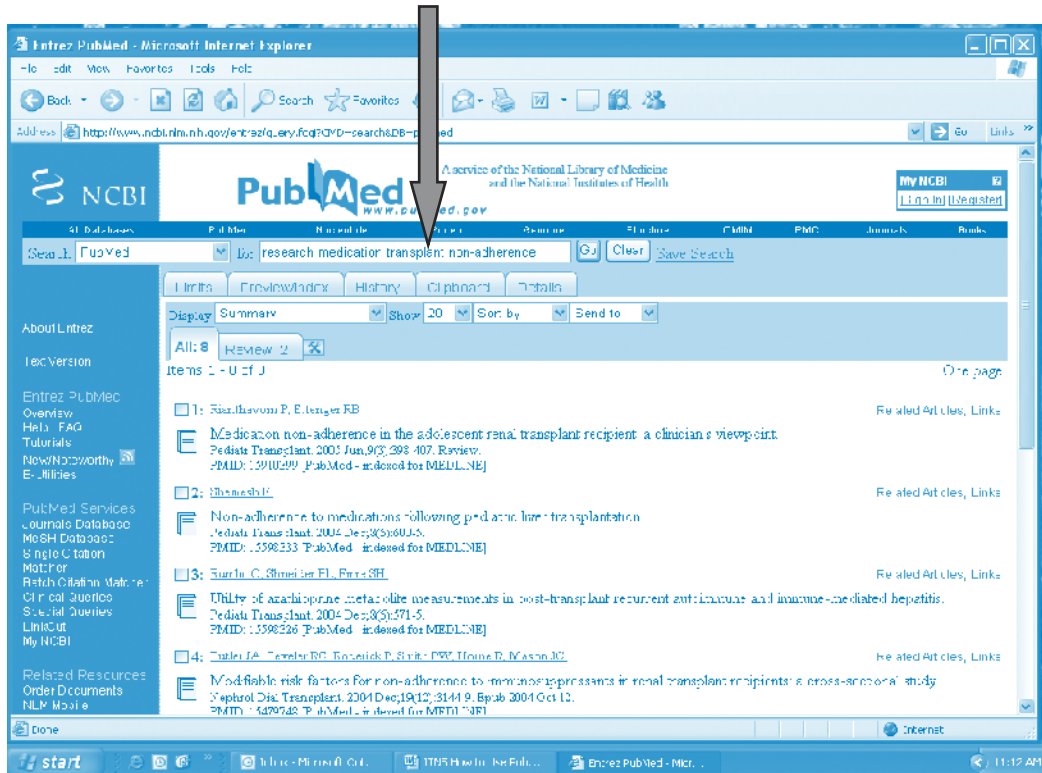Sandra Cupples, DNSc, RN

You have an identified a problem from your clinical practice and would like to locate the current research evidence on the topic. You have access to a computer and printer, but your institution does not have you "linked" to a medical library to access research articles. You have heard of a free website called PubMed and would like to give it a try (PubMed Fact Sheet). You are concerned because you have never used PubMed and you want to find all of the pertinent literature on your topic. This information will take you through each step of the process of using PubMed to locate your articles. Of course, you will need to read and evaluate the articles after you locate them! Let's begin. . .

Step 1

Locate the PubMed site on the World Wide Web at the following address: www.PubMed.gov.

Step 2

Once you locate the PubMed main page you will notice a box at the top of the screen to the left of the word "Go". You will enter search words related to your topic in this box. For example, if you are interested in locating research articles on medication non-adherence in transplant recipients, you would enter the words "research", "medication", "transplant" and "non-adherence" then click "Go". A list of citations will appear on your screen. The citations include author name(s), article title, journal name, year, volume, issue and page number.
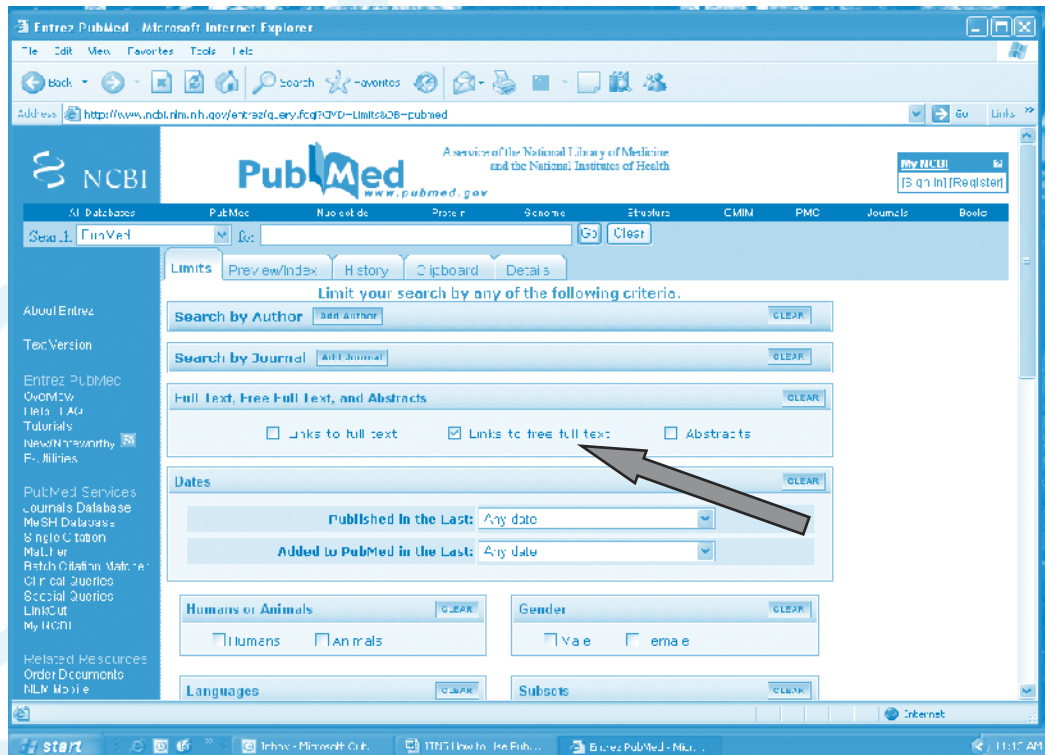
Step 3

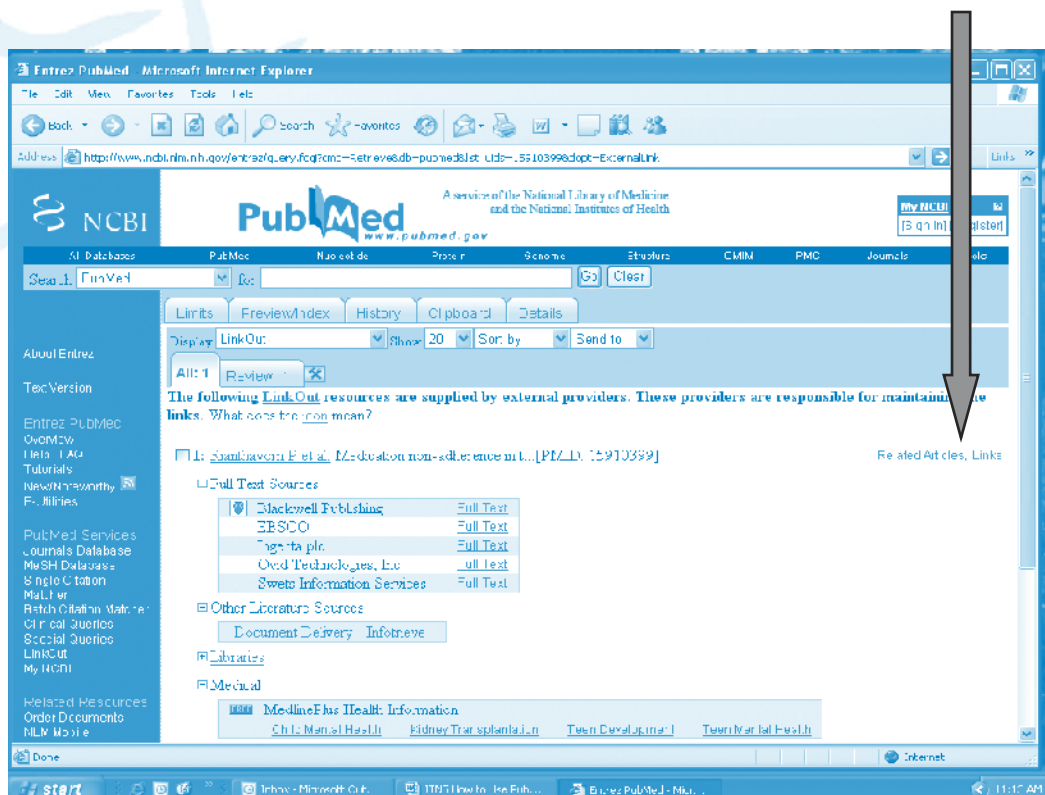Click on the abstract icon or the author(s') name(s) and you will then be linked to the citation and abstract.

Printing the article can be accomplished via several options. If the article is available in full text, the link will appear just below the journal name. Many times the full text articles are free. Just click on the link to the full text article and then print the article.

A second printing option is to click on "Limits" and then check "Links to free full text". This will limit the search to those full text articles that you can print at no cost.

Another printing option is to click on the "Link" icon just to the right of the citation. Then click on "Linkout". This allows you to access many on-line resources including full-text publications.

Other features of PubMed

PubMed can also be searched by author name, title words, text words, or journal names (PubMed FAQs). For example, if you know that an article that you are interested in reading was written by Sandra Cupples, you can type this in the search words box and then click "Go". A list of citations with S. Cupples as the author will appear.

You can also search by combinations of these. For example, you could enter the search words "Cupples, S" and "heart transplant" then click on "Go". A list of citations by author S. Cupples related to heart transplant appears.
The "Limits" tab allows you to perform more advanced searches. You can search by: journal, full text, free full text, abstract, date, subject type (e.g. human or animal), gender, language, subsets of journal groups, topics, or Medline types, article type (e.g. clinical trial, editorial) or subject age.

Additional Notes

When you first enter the PubMed main page you will notice a side bar on the left. If you are new at using PubMed, click on "Tutorials" from the side bar. A Quick tour web-based learning program on PubMed is offered. You can also take animated Quick tours on searching PubMed, using PubMed's MeSH database, and My NCBI. These tutorials involve active verbal guidance and instruction which can make using PubMed very fun and easy!

References

PubMed Fact Sheet — Accessed June 1, 2006 at:
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/factsheets/pubmed.html

PubMed FAQS — Accessed June 1, 2006 at:
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query/static/faq.html