Medline, CINAHL, Psychology & Behavioural Sciences Collection, Biomedical Reference Collection

EBSCO host

Full Guide



LKS

NHS
Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Searching for Evidence using EBSCOhost

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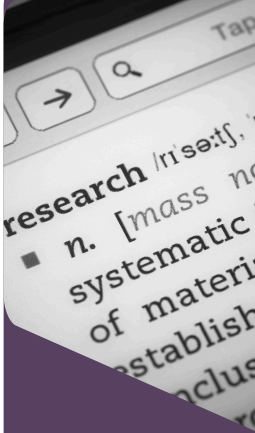
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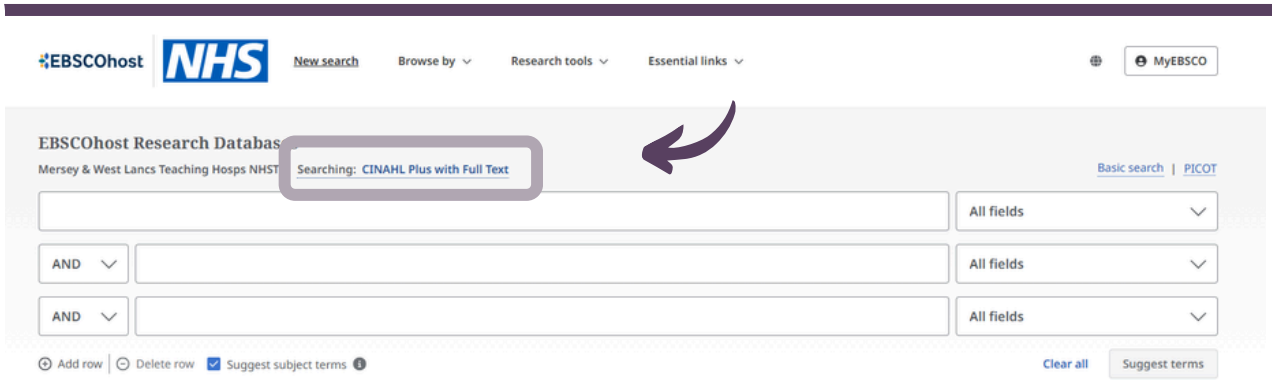
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What is EBSCOhost? 1

EBSCOhost is a search platform that enables you to search a variety of medical databases including **MEDLINE Complete, CINAHL Plus with full text,** the **Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection,** and the **Biomedical Reference Collection**



Databases that you can search with EBSCOhost:

MEDLINE Complete

MEDLINE Complete provides authoritative medical information on medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine, the health care system, pre-clinical sciences, and much more. MEDLINE Complete uses MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) indexing with tree, tree hierarchy, subheadings and explosion capabilities to search citations from over 5,400 current biomedical journals

CINAHL Plus with full text

CINAHL is the largest medical database for nursing and allied health. Produced by the US National Library of Medicine it contains millions of citations from thousands of biomedical and life science journals. It covers allied health specialties, dentistry, nursing, medicine, pre-clinical sciences. In addition to this CINAHL Plus with Full Text provides full text for more than 770 journals indexed in CINAHL

Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection

Psychology & Behavioural Sciences Collection is a comprehensive database covering information concerning topics in emotional and behavioural characteristics, psychiatry & psychology, mental processes, anthropology, and observational & experimental methods. This is the world's largest full text psychology database offering full text coverage for nearly 400 journals

Biomedical Reference Collection

The **Biomedical Reference Collection c**overs clinical medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and the pre-clinical sciences

Accessing EBSCOhost

Go to the **Library website**

library.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk

SCAN ME

Click on **Resources**

Followed by **Databases**

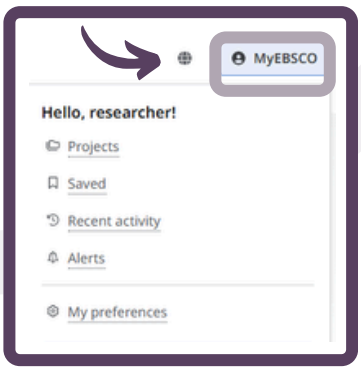
Select the **database** to wish to access

Choose from:

- Medline
- CINAHL
- Psychology & Behavioural Sciences Collection
- Biomedical Reference Collection

Creating a Personal MyEBSCO Account

To enable full functionality (create projects, download eBooks, save your research and sync to the mobile app, click on the **MyEBSCO** link in the top right, followed by **Sign into MyEBSCO**



You will be signed in through your **NHS Athens account** authentication

SCAN ME

If you don't have an NHS Athens account, you can register for one here:

openathens.nice.org.uk

Always make sure you log into your MyEBSCO account when carrying out a search

Questions and Concepts

It is important that you have a **clear idea of your question** before you start to search – what you get out of a database search is only as good as the question you put in.

The first thing to do is to identify the **key concepts or keywords** within your research question

Pick our your **main concepts.**

What are the most **important** aspects of your search?

This will ensure you do not miss out on any important information or research. These keywords will become the **basis** of your search strategy

It may be helpful to frame your research topic as a **question**, with a question mark at the end

PICO is a framework that can help with this.

PICO is a format for developing a good clinical research question prior to starting your research

It is a mnemonic used to describe the **four elements of a sound clinical question**

- P **Patient or Population**
- I **Intervention or Treatment**
- C **Comparison**
- O **Outcome**

Example: **In patients with osteoarthritis of the knee is hydrotherapy more effective than traditional physiotherapy in relieving pain?**

- P **Patient or Population** — Osteoarthritis and knee
- I **Intervention or Treatment** — Hydrotherapy
- C **Comparison** — Physiotherapy
- O **Outcome** — Pain relief

If PICO does not work for your question, other frameworks are available:.

Once you have thought of your **question** and **search terms**, consider what **synonyms** and **alternative spellings** or **brand names** there might be for your terms. You will need to search for these too.

Example: aspirin, acetylsalicylic acid, ASA.

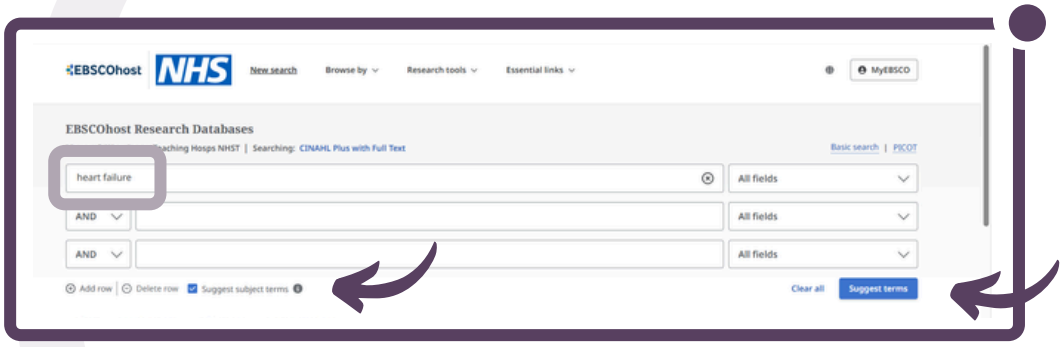
Carrying out a Thesaurus Search

A **thesaurus** is a list of terms (known as subject headings) that are used to label articles in a database. When you search using the thesaurus you will find **all the articles on the same topic no matter what text words you use**.

For example:

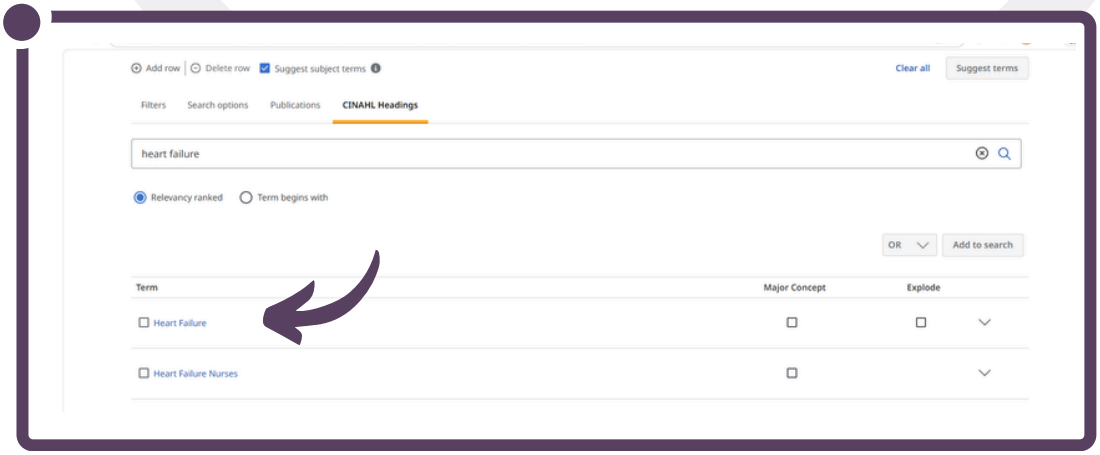
There are many possible phrases that could be used to search for articles on heart attacks, but the CINAHL subject heading for this condition is myocardial infarction. If you were to carry out a thesaurus search on CINAHL for this subject heading you would find all the articles on this subject regardless of whether they contain the phrase myocardial infarction, heart attack or cardiac arrest etc.

Ensure the box **Suggest Subject Terms** is ticked



Type in the subject you want to search for and click on **Suggest Terms**

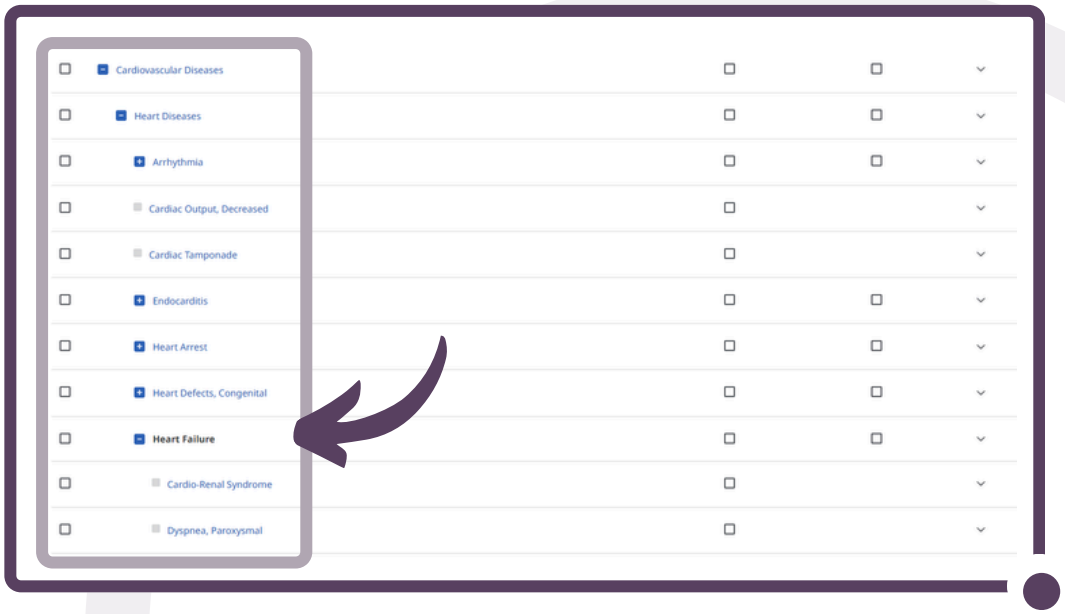
You will be shown a list of headings that most closely match your search term. Sometimes this list can be quite long, other times there might only be one term that matches your search. If there is no close match there will be no headings listed – try to think of another term for your subject and try again. If you cannot find a relevant thesaurus term – carry out a **text word search** instead.



If you would like to know more *about* a term, click on the term itself and you will see a **description** of what this term means



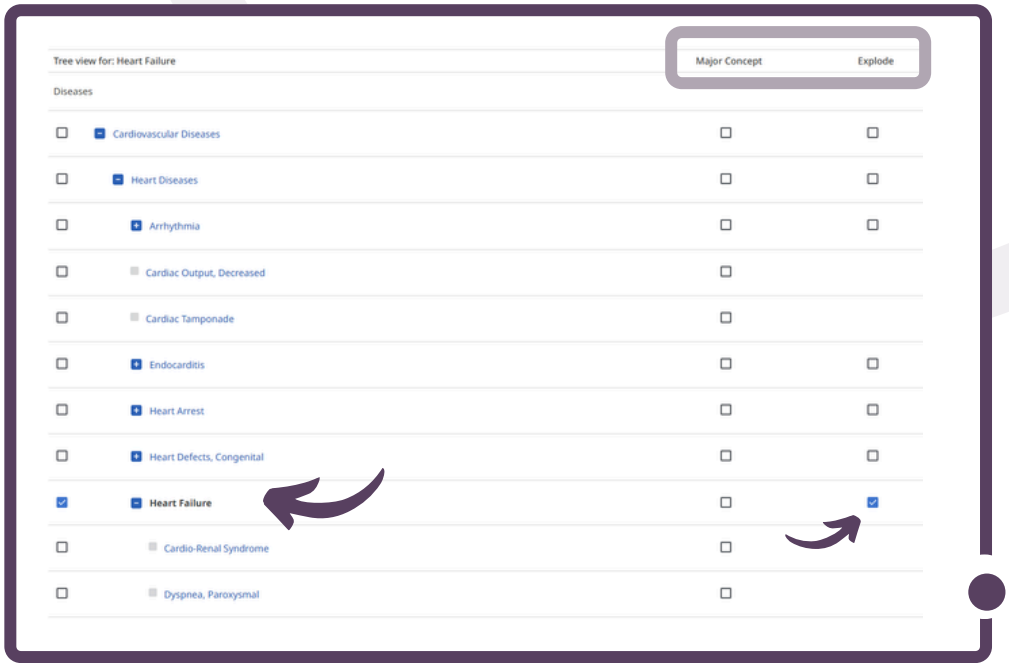
Scroll down further and you will be able to see the **hierarchy** of the various related thesaurus headings. Heart Diseases is the broader term that we could select if we wanted to also include articles that covered heart disease more generally. We can also see narrower terms which we can select to look at more specific types of heart failure – e.g. Dyspnea, Paroxysmal.



Tick the **box to the left of the term** you wish to use to select it.

Explode and Major Concept

Explode allows you to ***expand*** your search to include additional, more specific terms.
Major Concept will ***limit*** your search to only those articles in which the thesaurus term is the main subject of the article.



For example

Selecting **explode** for the thesaurus heading Heart Failure will find **all the articles about heart failure** in general, as well as all the articles under the heading Dyspnea, Paroxysmal.

Note that you can use the Major Concept and Explode options **at the same time.**

Also note that you have to **select your term** using the **box on the left** before you are able to select the Explode and/or Major Concept options.

Subheadings

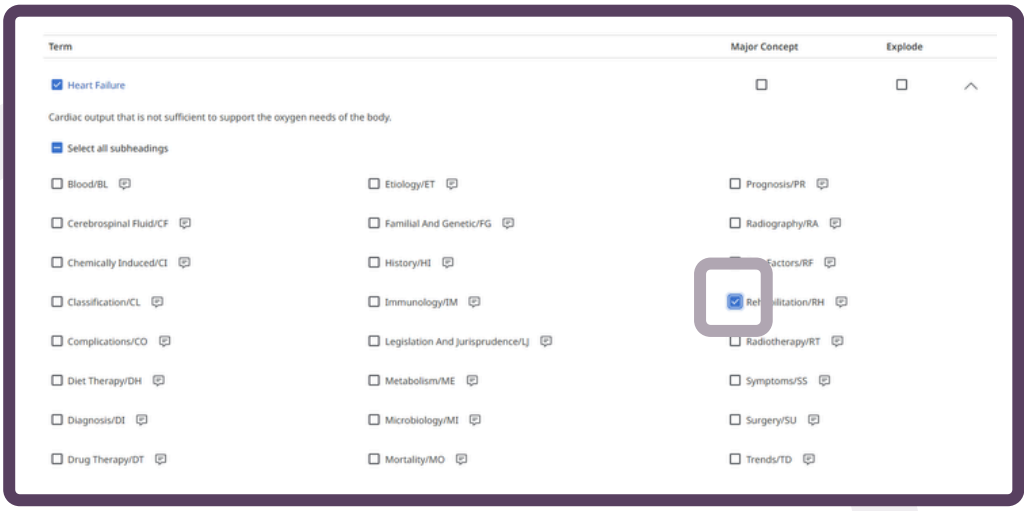
Once you have selected the term you wish to search you will also be given the option to restrict your search to **specific subheadings**



Click on the **downwards arrow** next to the Major Concept and Explode options

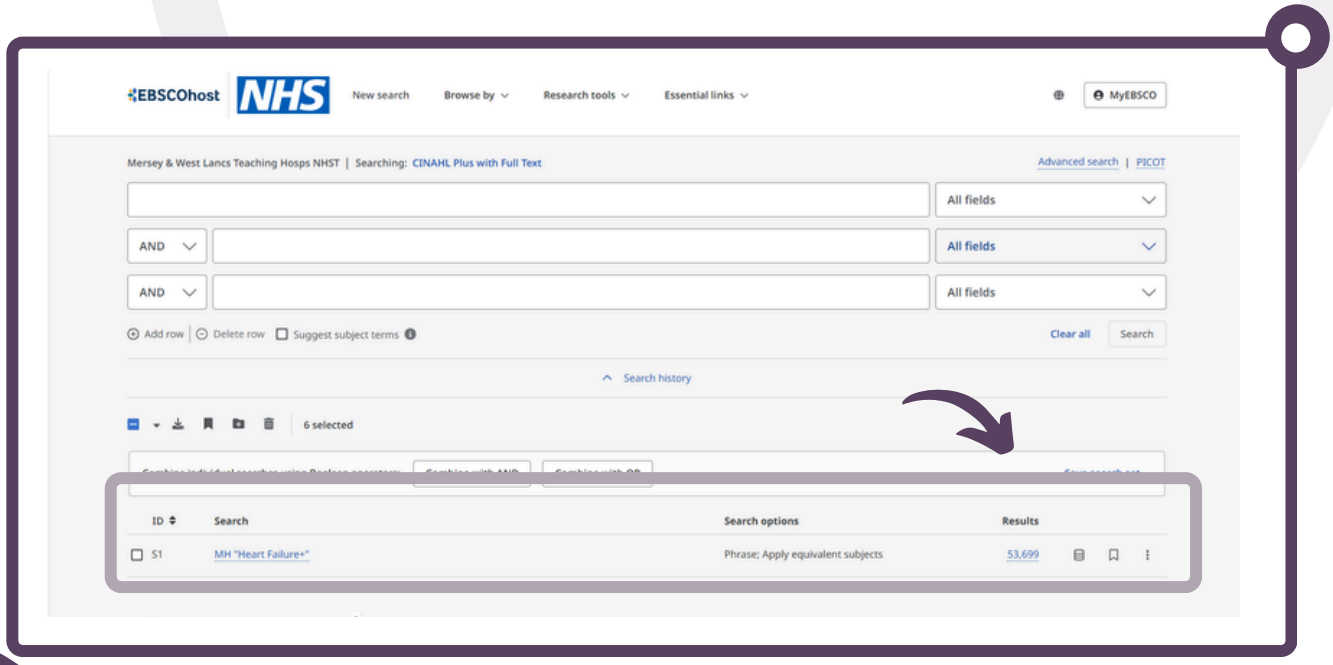
You can choose any number of relevant **subheadings** by clicking the appropriate boxes. We recommend choosing one or two at a time. If you do *not* want to limit your search to specific subheadings do **not** tick in any of the boxes

NB, Choosing **Select All Subheadings** will give you a smaller result so it is preferable to **not use** this limit



Once you've **selected the term(s) you wish to search**, then chosen if you want to use **explode** or **major concepts**, and finally selected any **subheadings** you might want to use – click on **Add to Search**, followed by **Search**

EBSCOhost will now run your search and you can see the **number of results** in your Search History



Carrying out a Text Word Search

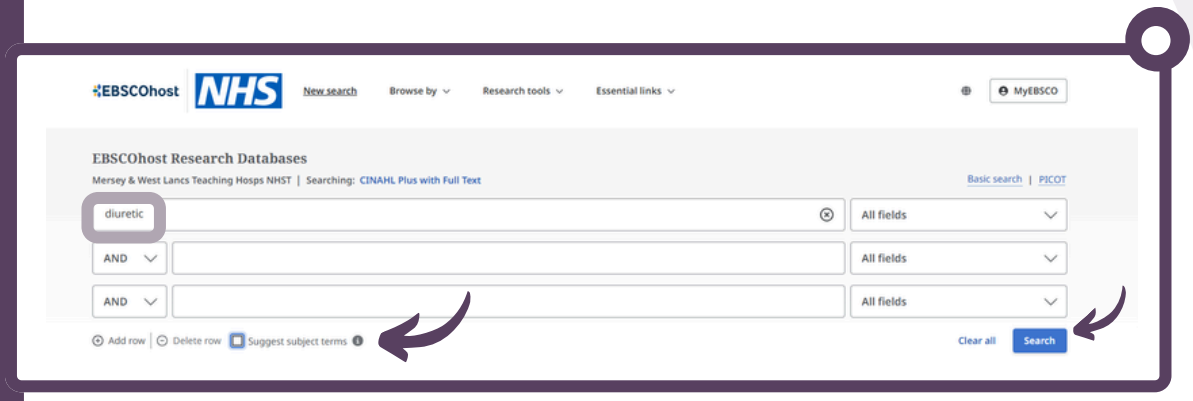
This is also sometimes referred to as a **keyword search** or **free text search**

Type in the term you are looking for and EBSCOhost will look for records that **include that term**. It uses the ***exact*** term that you type in, so it is important to consider if there are **alternate** terms you should also be searching for

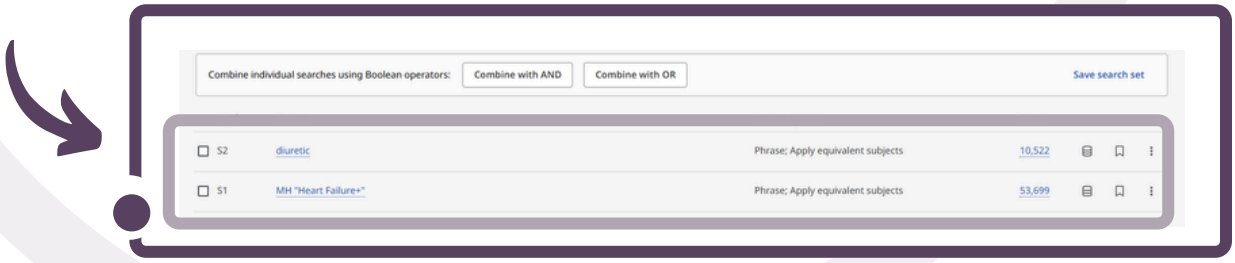
Consider if your term has **alternative spellings** (anaesthetic, anesthetic) or synonyms (stroke, cerebrovascular accident) or abbreviations (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, ADHD) or brand names (ibuprofen, neurofen)

EBSCO may suggest similar concepts which may be useful as you type. These can be selected by clicking on them

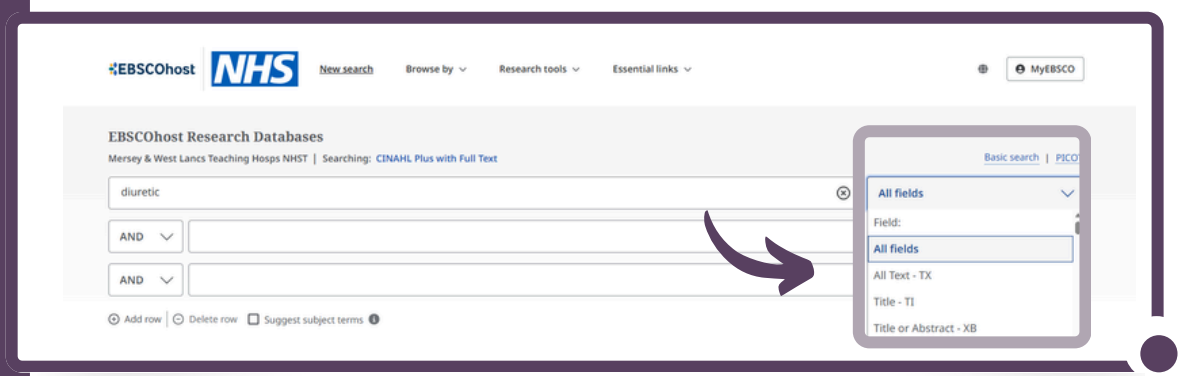
To carry out a text word search, **untick** the **Suggest Subject Terms box** before typing the term you are looking for into the search box and then clicking **Search**



EBSCOhost will now run the search and **a new search line** will be added to your search history



Note that EBSCOhost ***defaults*** to searching the title, author, abstract and subject heading for text word searches. If you would prefer to search other fields you can select the ones you want from the drop down list in the optional **Select a Field** box



Phrase Searching

If your term is made up of a phrase, rather than a single word, then using **phrase searchin**g will help. This is done by placing **parentheses** around the phrase you are searching for

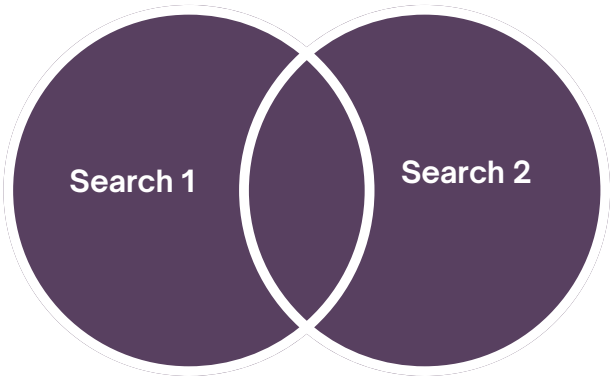
For example: entering the phrase **"mental health"** will only retrieve results that include the words **mental** *and* **health** when they are next to each other.

If you do not use parentheses you will retrieve **all** records where both the terms mental and health appear anywhere in the text (possibly with many other words between them) and in any order

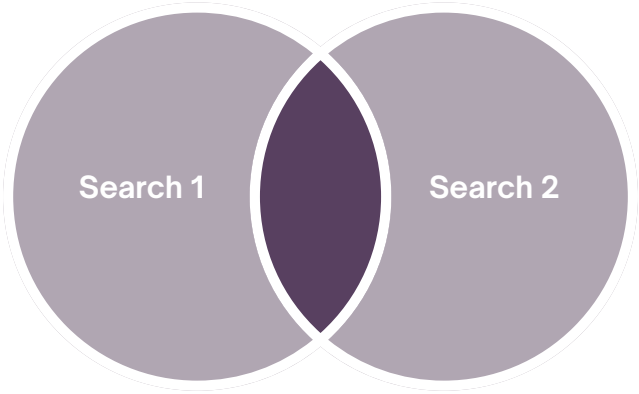
Combining Your Searches

To retrieve relevant articles you will need to **link** your various searches together. This is done by using **AND** or **OR** (known as Boolean searching)

OR searching broadens a search by looking for either

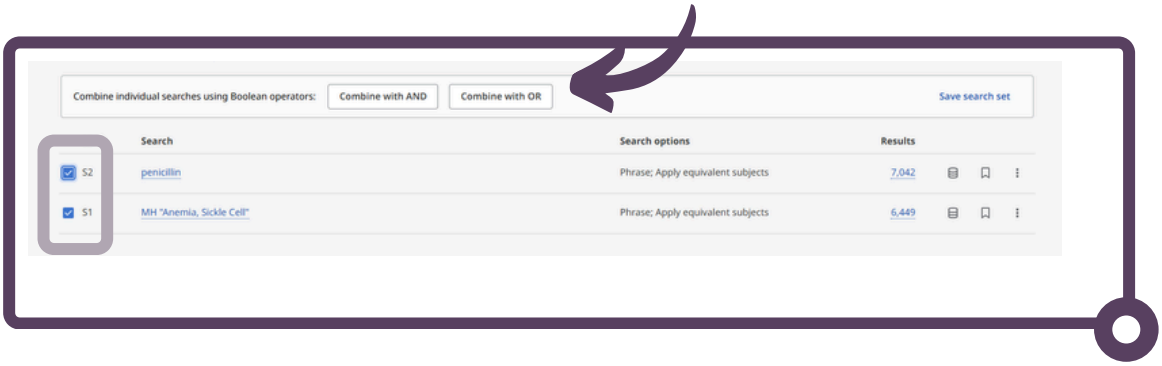


AND searching narrows a search by only looking for both terms in combination



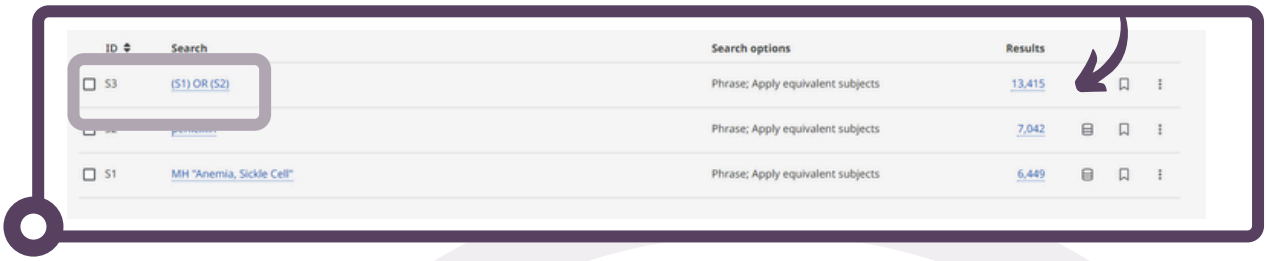
For example. In the search below, we have searched using the thesaurus heading **anemia, sickle cell (S1)** and we carried out a keyword search for **penicillin (S2)**

We can combine them using **OR,** by **clicking in the box** next to the search lines to be combined and then selecting the **Combine with OR** option

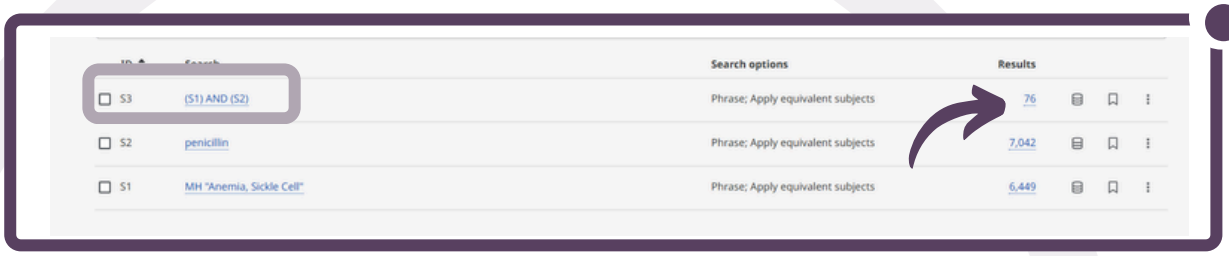


Now click on **Search** to complete the search

This gives us a new set of search results in our search history **(S3)**, with **13,415** articles found.



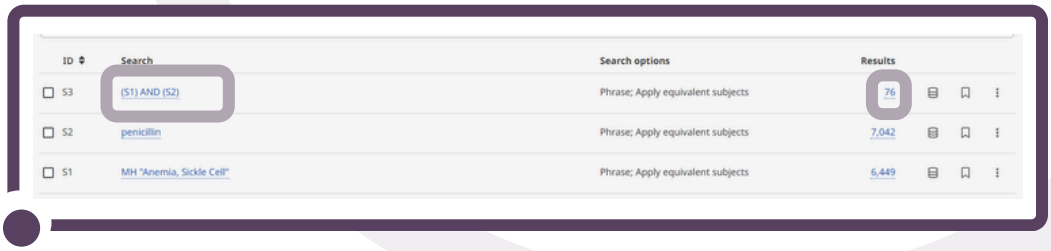
If we were to combine the two searches using **AND** we get only **76** results



Limits

If you are getting **too many results**, you can apply **limits** to narrow your search further. You can apply limits such as **Language, Dates** or **Age Group** to ensure the articles you retrieve are more likely to be relevant

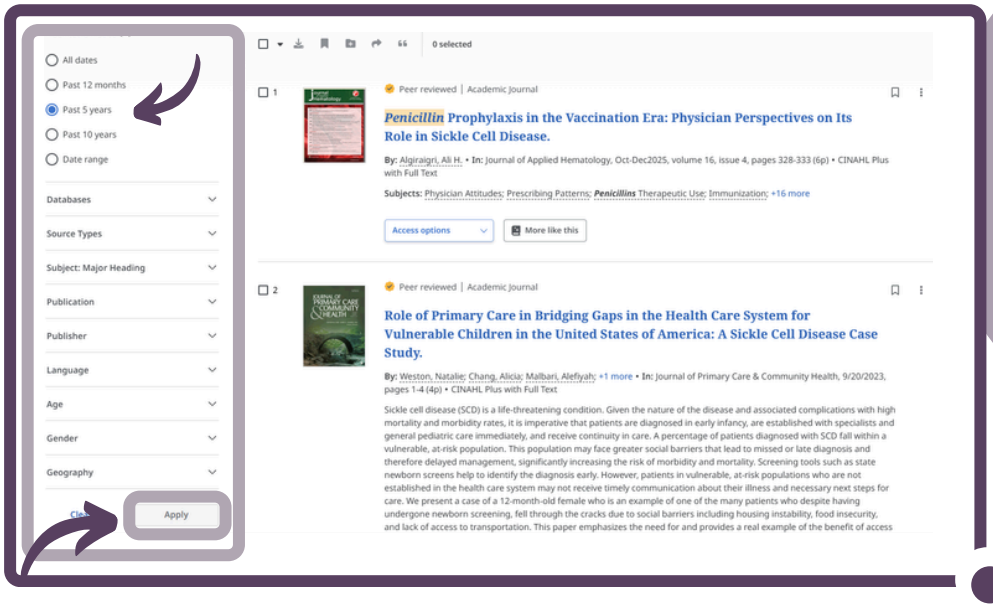
Firstly you need to be sure you are looking at the right set of results



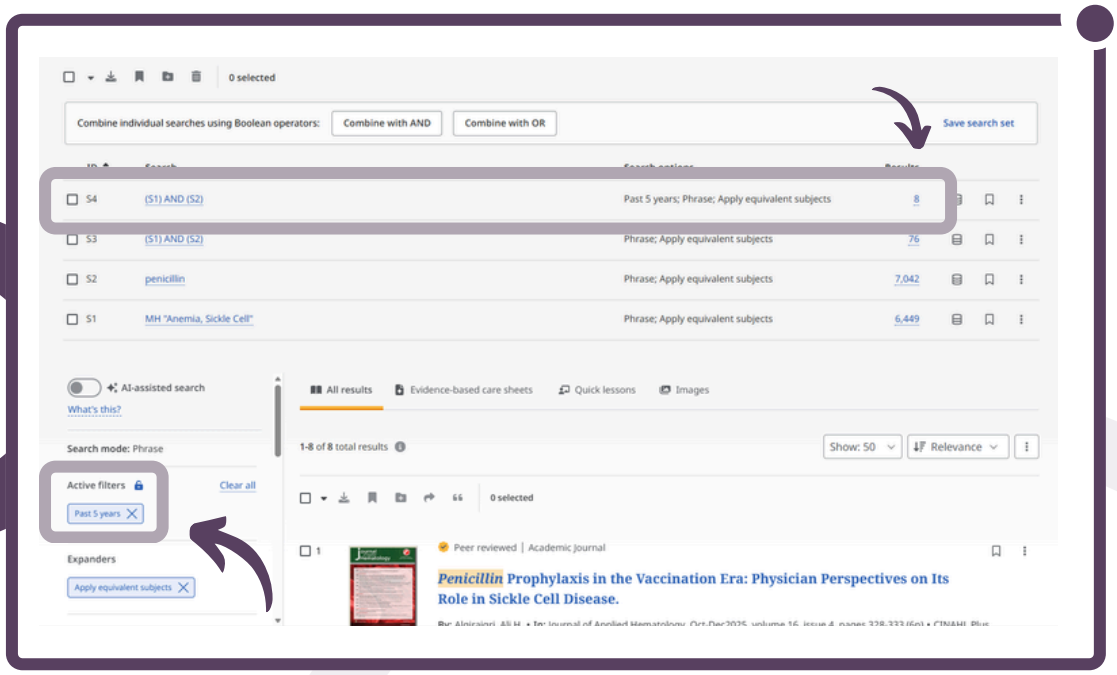
You can do this by either clicking on **the search itself** or on **the number of results** on the relevant search line

On the left of your screen you will be able to see the **Limit** options

Select the **limit(s)** that you want to apply to your search and then click on **Apply**



In this example I have limited my search to articles **published in the Past 5 Years**



A new line will be added to your Search History to reflect your limit(s)

By limiting our search to articles **published in the Past 5 Years** we have gone from 76 results (S3) to **8 results (S4)**

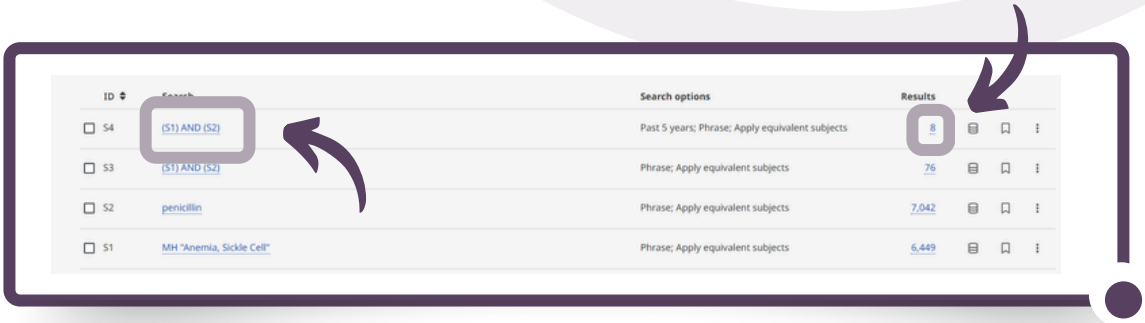
Viewing your Results

When you are happy that you have completed your search you can **look at the results** that you have found

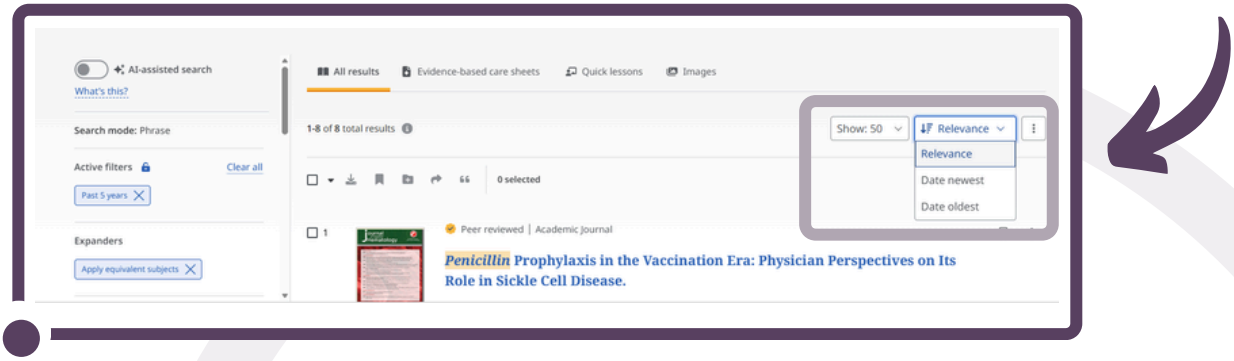
The results will contain the **citations** for **all the articles** that EBSCOhost has found

You can view the results, export them and save them in a range of different formats

To view the results, either click on **the search itself** or on **the number of results** on the relevant search line



There are a couple of options available to you at this point. You can change the **number of results per page** or the **relevance** of the results to either the *Date Newest* or the *Date Oldest*



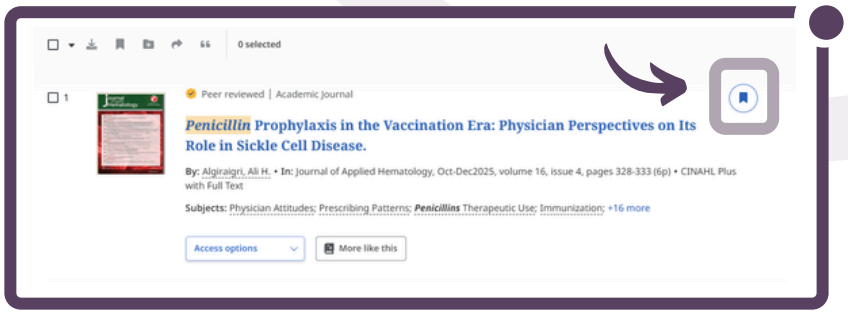
Under most articles, you will see a **Access Options** drop down menu

From this menu, choices include **PDF** which will take you directly to the full-text of the article, or **Request This Item** which takes you to a form where you can request the article from the library

Some articles will only give you the option to **Request This Item**, and will not have the option of full-text

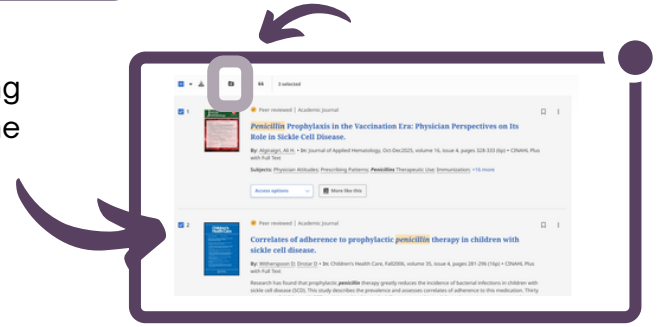


Saving your Results



You can save individual results by clicking the **Save icon** next to the result you wish to save

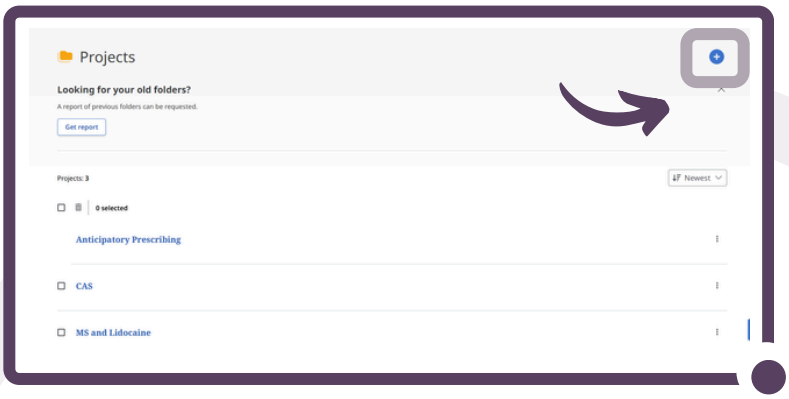
You can also save multiple results by selecting them and then clicking on the **Save icon** at the top of the list



Click on **MyEBSCO** at the top of the page, followed by **Saved** to access your saved article(s)

Creating Projects

You may wish to set up projects where you can keep all your saved articles in one place



Click on **MyEBSCO**, then **Projects**

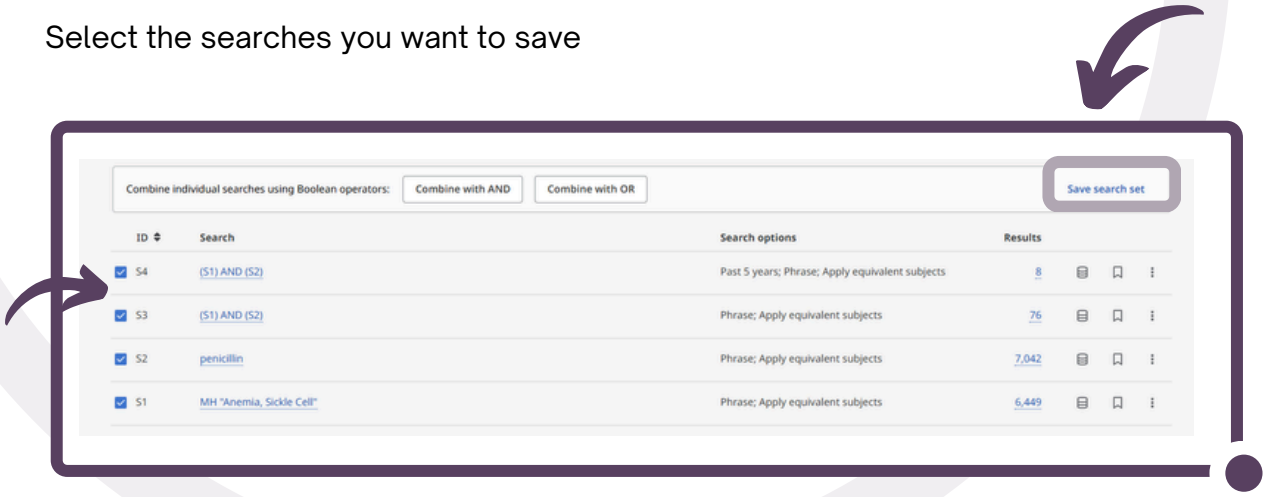
Click on the **+ sign** to allow you to create and name your new project

Your projects will stay in your MyEBSCO account unless you choose to delete them

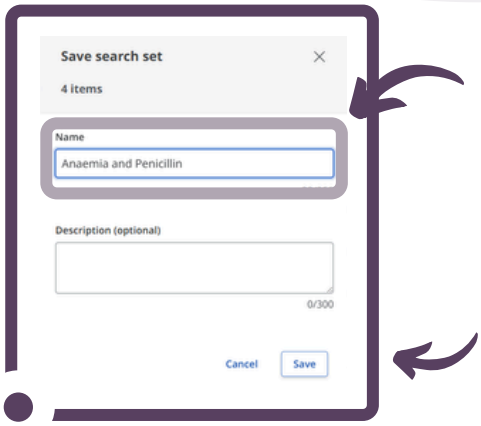
Saving your Search Strategy

You may want to **save your search strategy.** This is a good idea if it is a search you might want to rerun at a later date or if you need a record of the search strategy to include in the write up of your search

Select the searches you want to save



Click on **Save Search Set**



A pop-up box will appear. Give your Search Set a **name**

You can add a description if you would like but this is optional

Click on **Save**

You can access your saved search sets from your **MyEBSCO** page

Click on **Saved,** then **Search Sets**

Your Search Sets will appear in a list

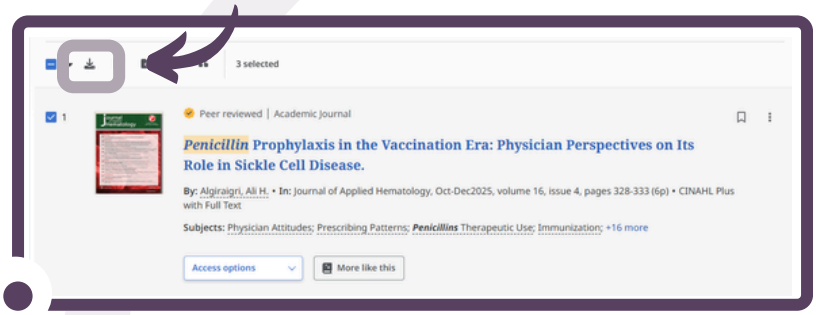


You can **delete the Search Set or edit the details** as required

Click on the ellipsis to see your choices

Printing Results

To print, **select the records** you wish to print, then click on the **DOWNLOAD** icon. Once downloaded, your results can be **printed**

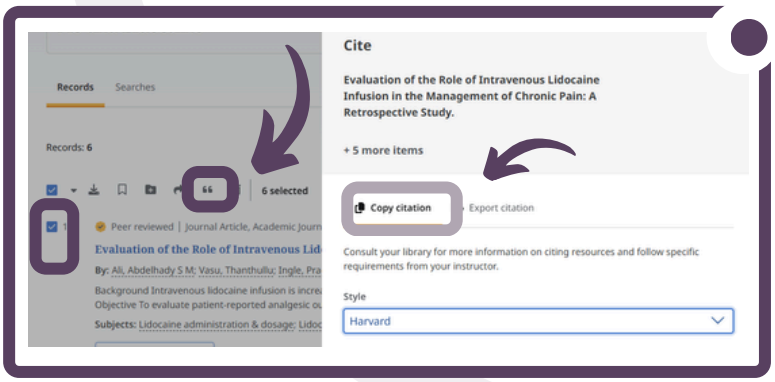


Alternatively, you can print from one of your Projects

To do this, click on **MyEBSCO,** then follow the above instructions

Citing or Exporting Results

To cite OR export your results, **select the records** you wish to cite or export and click on the **CITE** icon

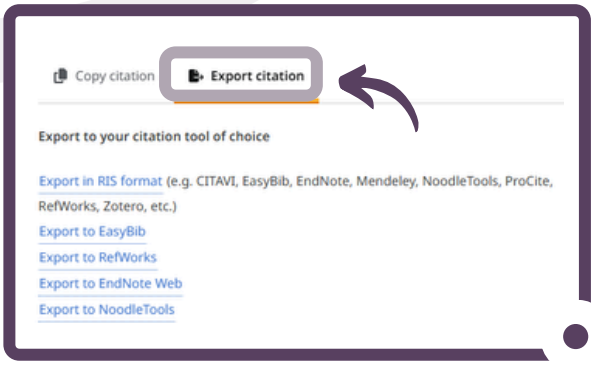


You can now choose to **CITE** your articles in a particular style eg. Harvard or APA

Click on **Copy Citation** and choose your style

OR

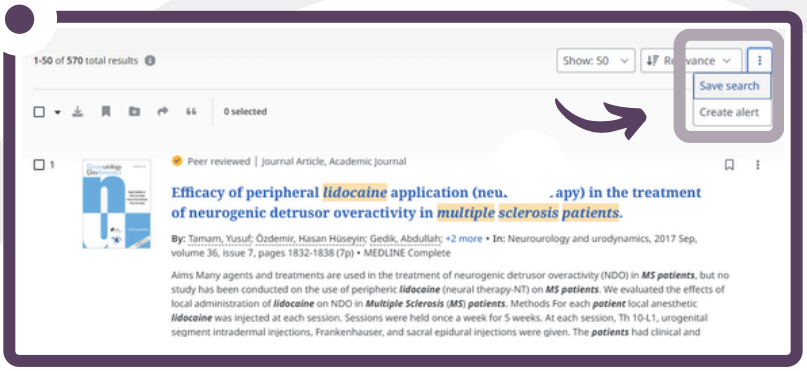
You can choose to **EXPORT** your articles to your citation tool of choice



Search Alerts

Search Alerts save valuable research time, and can be set up to provide automatic e-mail notification whenever new search results become available

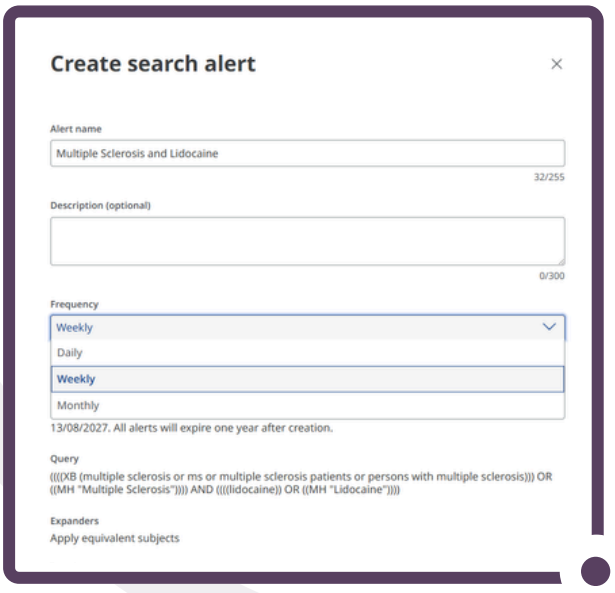
To create a Search Alert:



After running a search, click the ellipsis on the right and select **Create Alert**

NB. You need to be logged in to your personal **MyEBSCO account** at this point

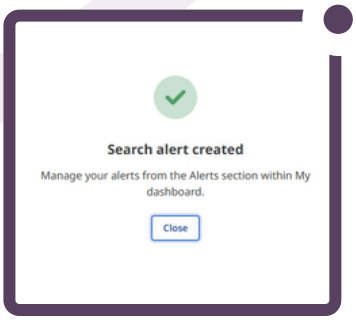
On the Alert screen, enter the **required information** (Alert name, Email address), select a Frequency and notification preferences, and click **Create Alert**

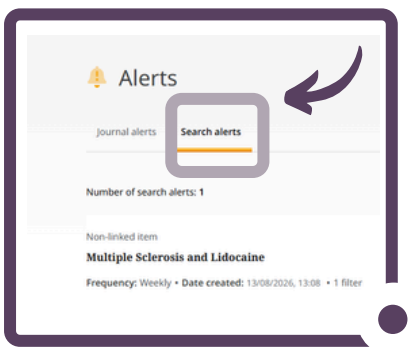


NB. You can add **more** email addresses in the Additional recipients field

Additional recipients are able to *unsubscribe* themselves from the search alert using the unsubscribe link found in the alert email they receive

Your created subject alert is now confirmed. Click **Close** to return to the results screen





You can find all your Alerts by going to **MyEBSCO** and clicking on **Alerts,** then **Search Alerts**

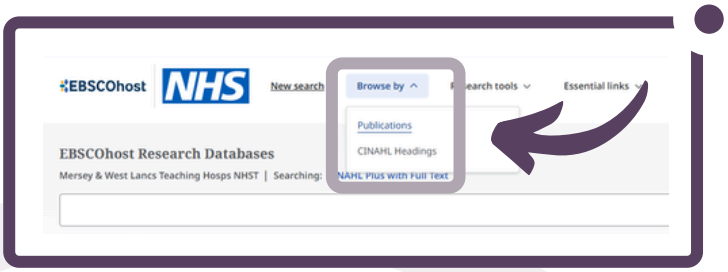
Journal Alerts

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Journal Alerts save valuable research time, and can be set up to provide automatic e-mail notification whenever a new issue of a particular journal becomes available in the EBSCO interface you are using

To create a journal alert:

Click the **Browse By** link in the top toolbar and then click **Publications**



You will be taken to the **Publications tab** below the Advanced search guided style search boxes

To locate the publication, enter the **name of the journal** in the **Search for Publications** box and click the magnifying glass to search through the list of titles. Alternatively you can ***browse*** the journals alphabetically

Click on the **name** of the journal for which you would like to create an alert

From the journal's Publication Details, click on the ellipsis on the top right, and then click the **Create Alert** link



NB. You need to be logged in to your personal **MyEBSCO account** at this point



On the Create Journal Alert screen, enter the **required information** (Alert name, Email address), and notification preferences, and click **Create Alert**

Your created journal alert is now confirmed. Click **Close** to return to the results screen

You can find all your Alerts by going to **MyEBSCO** and clicking on **Alerts,** then **Journal Alerts**



Further Resources

This workbook is designed to **demonstrate and explain how to carry out a successful basic search** using the EBSCOhost database. However, **further resources are available** if you wish to go into more detail about how EBSCOhost works or how to search for literature in general

We have links to a number of **guides and video tutorials** on our website **here**

library.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk /literature-searching-guidance

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Framing your questions (PICO and other search strategies). The following websites look at search strategies in **more detail**

NYU Library - Identifying Core Search Concepts & Selecting Keywords

Leeds University - Search Concept Tools

The Library and Knowledge Service also has a **number of books** available on how to carry out a literature search.

Search the Library Catalogue **here**

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Contact Us & Help

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact us



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