

## Comparison of Medline (via Ovid interface) and PubMed

### Medline Advantages

- Better mapping of search terms to MeSH; using MeSH usually results in more relevant results
- Better user control with fewer automated functions, e.g., *Explode* and addition of keywords to search
- Common limits, e.g. *English language & Human*, are available on the main screen
- Same interface as *Compendex*, *Evidence Based Medicine Reviews*, *INSPEC*, *PsycINFO*, etc.
- Search history (results sets) displayed on main page for easy combination and modification
- *Clinical Queries* offers a third, optimized filter called “best balance of sensitivity and specificity” (in addition to broad and narrow options, which are the only two available in PubMed)
- *Results Tools* allow easy printing, emailing, saving or exporting of results
- Search History can be included in an email or printout of results
- Results can easily be emailed to multiple addresses
- Saving search results to *RefWorks* can be done by *Direct Export* (the quickest, easiest option)
- Higher number of searchable fields
- A few more limits are available

### PubMed Advantages

- Free access to all via the Web; not dependent on your employer subscribing to Ovid
- *Related Articles* link works well, allowing user to build search from “one really good article”
- *Clinical Queries* simultaneously searches Clinical Study Categories, Systematic Reviews, and Medical Genetics and displays the top five results for each on the same page
- *Find related data* on results list pages searches your choice of 30+ resources, e.g., Genome, Nucleotide, SNP, Protein. This is probably most useful after moving selected articles to the Clipboard. Descriptions appear when a resource is selected from the drop down menu.
- After indexing, individual records have an *All links from this record* box that links to other resources as above. Descriptions appear at mouse-over.
- Slightly more current; records not yet indexed are retrieved due to default addition of keyword searching
- Contains more records; citations which are outside the scope of Medline

### Medline Disadvantages

- May not be available in one’s workplace
- Boolean searches, e.g. *x* and *y*, default to keyword searching and that usually results in inferior retrieval as opposed to mapping each term/phrase to MeSH

### PubMed Disadvantages

- Automatic term mapping is not as effective as Ovid’s mapping, for either words or phrases
- Phrase search terms are also searched as individual words in all fields (including author names and journal titles) and combined with AND; this greatly broadens the search, often resulting in many false hits. \*\* To avoid this, enclose phrases in double quotes
- Many useful options are hidden behind links, e.g. adding subheadings and restricting to MeSH Major Topic
- *Limits* remain active for subsequent searches unless they are deselected
- Results must be saved as a text file before importing to *RefWorks*
- Search History cannot be included with results in email or print
- When combining previous sets, must enter Boolean operators in all caps and include pound sign with set numbers, e.g. #1 AND #2