What are the search strategies used by the MEDLINE Clinical Queries?

Clinical Queries allow the user to limit searches using specific search strategies to aid in retrieving scientifically sound and clinically relevant study reports indexed in MEDLINE databases.

Searches can be refined using specific search strategies designed to produce results in 9 research areas:

- Therapy
- Diagnosis
- Prognosis
- Reviews
- Clinical Prediction Guides
- Qualitative
- Causation (Etiology)
- Costs
- Economics

As research may require different emphasis, three strategies are provided for each area:

- **High Sensitivity** – the broadest search to include ALL relevant material. It may include less relevant materials.
- **High Specificity** – the most targeted search to include only the most relevant result set, may miss some relevant materials.
- **Best Balance** – retrieves the best balance between Sensitivity and Specificity.

Clinical Queries are designed for clinician use. For reference, the search strategies behind the limiter values are below:

- **Therapy - High Sensitivity**
  
  (MP clinical and MP trial) or (MH “clinical trials as topic+”) or (PT clinical trial) or (MP random*) or (MH “random allocation”) or (MW therapeutic use) or (MW “administration & dosage”) or (MW adverse effects) or (MW contraindications) or (MW poisoning)

- **Therapy - High Specificity**
  
  (PT randomized controlled trial) or (MP randomized controlled trial)

- **Therapy - Best Balance**
  
  (PT randomized controlled trial) or (MP randomized) or (MP placebo)

- **Diagnosis - High Sensitivity**
(MP sensitiv*) or (MP diagnos*) or (MW diagnosis)

• Diagnosis - High Specificity
  TI specificity or AB specificity

• Diagnosis - Best Balance
  (MP sensitiv*) or (MP predictive and MP value*) or (MP accurac*)

• Prognosis - High Sensitivity
  (MH "incidence") OR (MH "mortality+") OR (MH "follow-up studies") OR (TI prognos* or AB prognos*) OR (TI predict* or AB predict*) OR (TI course* or AB course*)

• Prognosis - High Specificity
  (TI prognos* or AB prognos*) OR (TI first and TI episode) OR (AB first and AB episode) or (TI cohort or AB cohort)

• Prognosis - Best Balance
  (MH "prognosis") or (TI diagnosed or AB diagnosed) OR (MP cohort*) OR (TI predictor* or AB predictor*) or (TI death or AB death) or (MH "models, statistical+")

• Reviews - High Sensitivity
  (TI search* or AB search*) OR (MP meta analysis or PT meta-analysis) OR (PT review) OR MW (diagnosis or radiography or ultrasonography or radionuclide imaging or pathology) OR (TI associated or AB associated)

• Reviews - High Specificity
  (TI MEDLINE or AB MEDLINE) OR (TI systematic and TI review) OR (AB systematic and AB review) OR PT meta-analysis

• Reviews - Best Balance
  (MP meta analysis or PT meta-analysis) OR (PT review) or (TI search* or AB search*)

• Clinical Prediction Guides - High Sensitivity
  MP predict* OR (TI scor* or AB scor*) OR MP observ*

• Clinical Prediction Guides - High Specificity
  TI (validate or validation) OR AB (validate or validation)

• Clinical Prediction Guides - Best Balance
(TI predict* or AB predict*) OR MP validat* or (TI develop* or AB develop*)

- Qualitative - High Sensitivity
  
  (TI interview* or AB interview*) OR (MW psychology) OR MH "health services administration+

- Qualitative - High Specificity
  
  (TI qualitative or AB qualitative) OR (TI themes or AB themes)

- Qualitative - Best Balance
  
  MP interview* OR MP experience* or (TI qualitative or AB qualitative)

- Causation (Etiology) - High Sensitivity
  
  MP risk* OR MH "cohort studies+" OR (TI group* or AB group*)

- Causation (Etiology) - High Specificity
  
  (TI relative and TI risk*) or (AB relative and AB risk*) OR (TI risks or AB risks) OR (MP cohort stud*)

- Causation (Etiology) - Best Balance
  
  MP risk OR MP mortality OR (TI cohort or AB cohort)

- Costs - High Sensitivity
  
  MW economics OR (TI cost or AB cost) OR MH "health care costs"

- Costs - High Specificity
  
  (TI cost effectiveness or AB cost effectiveness) OR (MH "health care costs")

- Costs - Best Balance
  
  (MH "costs and cost analysis+") OR (TI costs or AB costs) OR (TI cost effective* or AB cost effective*)

- Economics - High Sensitivity
  
  (PT randomized controlled trial) OR (TI cost effectiveness or AB cost effectiveness) or (TI cost effective or AB cost effective)

- Economics - High Specificity
  
  (TI cost effective or AB cost effective) OR (TI sensitivity analys* or AB sensitivity analys*)

- Economics - Best Balance
(MP cost*) OR (MP cost benefit analys*) OR (MH "health care costs")

See also:

What are MEDLINE Clinical Queries?