**Online Databases That A Medical Writer Can Rely Upon**

Research is a crucial part of the writing, and good research skill is one among the [essential qualities of a medical writer](https://onlinemedicalwriting.com/blog/2019/05/23/what-is-medical-writing/). Out of the time required for creating a write-up, typically 50% of the time is spent on researching the topic for relevant information. Effective research allows a writer to gain in-depth knowledge about the topic, source authentic information in lesser time and improve the credibility of the write-up.

Searching for relevant piece of information from the ocean of information available online is like looking for a needle in a haystack. It is a skill! Poor research skills in a writer, can be mentally exhausted, and can be potentially time-consuming and annoying. However, there are reliable online research databases that can help a medical writer overcome these hindrances. These databases allow the writer to narrow down their search to obtain focused information.

[PubMed](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/) - PubMed is a free search engine, a digital repository that has biomedical literature, life science journals and online books. It comprises of more than 30 million citations that may include links to full-text content from PubMed Central and publisher web sites. [The PubMed User Guide](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/help/#how-do-i-search-pubmed) details various search options available in the database.

**Quick tips**

* Combine the keywords using AND or OR operator to search the concepts. The word AND finds the intersection of the concepts, "OR" finds any one of the concepts.
* Field tags will limit the search to particular field. For example [ti] to search a title word, [au] to search an author name word etc.
* Other filters of article type, timelines etc can be used for narrowing down the searches and getting search results that are focused and relevant.
* Sign in NCBI (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/account/?back_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov%2Fmyncbi%2F>)

[E](https://www.embase.com/login)MBASE - Embase claims to be the world’s most comprehensive biomedical literature database. It has biomedical literature from 1947 to the present day providing up-to-date biomedical information.

**Quick tips**

* Search more than one word or phrase by separating them with OR and put them in brackets.

(heart attack or myocardial infraction or MI)

* Look for the article link icon on the reference details to get the full text of the document.
* EMBASE provides an option to print or email your search results

[The Cochrane Library-](https://www.cochranelibrary.com/) The Cochrane Library is a collection of databases in medicine and other healthcare specialties. They generate authoritative and reliable information, unconstrained by commercial and financial interests.

**Quick tips**

* Search Different words with same root using \* i.e. cardio\* will search for cardiovascular diseases, cardiotocography, etc.
* To search multiple terms, use AND to combine all terms | OR combines similar terms into one big group and NOT will exclude term from the search
* Add to search engine option saves your search history done so far.

In addition to the ones, mentioned above, there are other databases also that a writer can explore. Some examples include ERIC, EBSCO, EthOS, Web of Science, SCOPUS, etc. There are others which are domain specific such as PEDro for physiotherapy research, PsychINFO for psychology and psychiatry research, and CINAHL for nursing and allied health research.

These online resources have extensive information with smart filters that supports a medical writer in obtaining more accurate results. It is recommended for a medical writer to [get familiar with these resources](http://www.onlinemedicalwriting.com/) to obtain valuable studies for their work/projects. There are various health websites that claim to have reliable data, however, websites with the extensions **.gov** or **.edu** are generally recommended by medical community.