

LITERATURE SEARCH

WHY PERFORM A LITERATURE SEARCH?

Prior to or during the development of your research question, it is important to determine what has already been done on the subject. It is essential to review existing sources of evidence prior to conducting any research. A literature search using online databases is the most efficient way to do this.

Reviewing the literature can help you to:

- Gain a better understanding of your topic
- Avoid duplication research
- Avoid errors made in similar research
- Determine how your research can add to the existing body of knowledge
- Obtain ideas to help refine/amend your research question
- Compare/contrast your findings
- Acquire new ideas for methods, definitions, and/or outcome variables that you can use for your study

INTERNET SEARCH ENGINES

The following websites are excellent for literature searching. For just about any clinical study, your first, best, and primary resource will be the MEDLINE database. In some cases you will need a password which your library may be able to provide.

MEDLINE - <http://medlineplus.gov/>

PubMed - <http://www.pubmed.gov>

Intute - www.intute.ac.uk/

The National Library for Health - www.library.nhs.uk/Default.aspx

For assistance with your literature search contact the library or visit www.grmerc.net/research.html and fill out a literature search request form.