Making the most of Medline

What is MEDLINE?

- premiere biomedical database produced by the National Library of Medicine
- coverage: 1948 – present
- contains over 18 million references to journal articles in life sciences with a concentration on biomedicine
- indexes 5,500 international journals
- includes journal articles, reviews, letters, editorials, comments
- does NOT include books, conference papers, meeting abstracts, theses
- abstracts available for many entries
- citations may be retrieved by author name, Medical Subject Headings, text words from titles or abstracts
- free MEDLINE access is available through NLM's PubMed
- Tampere University Library provides access to Ovid MEDLINE as another alternate search engine for searching the MEDLINE database. The electronic full text journals subscribed of the Tampere University Library are linked to Ovid Medline.

Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)

- MEDLINE uses MeSH as its controlled vocabulary for indexing database articles.
- 6-15 subject headings are assigned per article, with up to 3 assigned for major emphasis of the article.
- MeSH is updated annually to reflect current usage.
- MeSH allows for more precise subject searching. Articles are indexed to the most specific term available.
- An advantage of MeSH is that a single term has been used to represent a particular concept no matter how it was referred to in the original article.
- MEDLINE allows users to "explode" a category of terms from the MeSH TREES (MeSH terms in a hierarchy from general to specific) to retrieve all of the articles on the general term and all of the specific terms listed underneath. (Terms are automatically exploded in PubMed unless you change the default.)