SEARCH QUESTION: You have participated in many discussions on the connection between the physician patient relationship and patient satisfaction. You are interested in finding well-written evidence-based articles on this topic.

Follow these steps to achieve good search results:

Step 1. Develop a complete search strategy.

Identify and define unfamiliar topics.

- Databases: UpToDate, STAT!Ref
- Books: Search Catalog [URL]
- eBooks: [URL]

What topic are you searching? Do your search terms answer the question?

Use the Building Block method to conduct searches.

Search each topic separately to find the most useful search strategy.

Topic 1: physician patient relationship

Topic 2: patient satisfaction

Limits: well-written, evidence-based articles

- Allows for exploration of different aspects of each topic.
- Eliminates irrelevant search results.
- Can easily switch search directions at any time.
- Combine the searches using Boolean Operators (AND, OR, NOT).

~ Use synonyms (word/phrase similar in meaning to the original) as another search word/phrase.

- What word/phrase is used in the literature to describe your topic?
- Is it different from your search word/phrase?

**Step 2.** Start search in PubMed; open MyNCBI account to save your work.

*Search PubMed within article titles ONLY*

A quick, *but incomplete*, way to find information is to search article titles for a specific keyword/phrase.

Your search can be limited by publication dates, type of article, languages, species, gender, ages of subjects, text options and specific search fields.

To specifically search for article titles, use **Search Field Tags >Title**.
Search PubMed with MeSH⁴ terms

To retrieve results that match the *content* of your search terms, use the MeSH vocabulary within PubMed.

---

⁴ MeSH = Medical Subject Headings, a biomedical vocabulary that allows for citation retrieval at different levels of specificity.
PubMed matches the search phrase, physician patient relationship, with the MeSH term, Physician-Patient Relations. (See screenshot at bottom of page.)

The definition, (#1) is “the interactions between physician and patient”.

Subheadings (#2) are used with MeSH terms to retrieve frequently discussed aspects of the topic.

To restrict your search to those results in which the MeSH term is the major topic of the citation, use „Restrict to MeSH Major Topic. (#3)

Use the PubMed search builder (#4) to search the database with the MeSH term.

(NOTE: if you use more than one subheading, the database will automatically include the correct Boolean operator, AND, OR, NOT.)
Search PubMed using All Fields and MeSH terms

Another way to search PubMed is to enter your search term/phrase in the search field. Your search words are automatically matched to MeSH terms (content matching) and All Fields: words in journal/article titles or abstracts and author names (character matching).

PubMed calls this feature „automatic term matching“.
What is found on a PubMed Search Results page?

> free full text articles from publishers (Filter your results)

> articles published in English (Filter your results)

> manage or change MyNCBI search results filters (Filter your results)

> pin-pointing other article titles with search terms
> more free full text articles from PubMed Central

> Search details: how the database modified the search

PubMed routinely changes or adds additional search terms to your search to optimize citation retrieval. These results can be reconfigured to better match YOUR needs. Use **Search details** to view and change the search.

From the Search Results page, open Search details by clicking „See more…“.

---

**Search Details**

**Query Translation:**


The search phrase ‘physician patient relationship’ is first matched to a corresponding MeSH Term and then to other search fields. ([All Fields] = words in journal or article titles, abstracts or author names.)

NOTICE how each phrase is searched as a whole and then as individual words.
The query translation can be redone to better fit the needs of YOUR search.

**Search Details**

**Query Translation:**

"physician-patient relations"[MeSH Terms] OR "physician-patient relations"[All Fields] OR "physician patient relationship"[All Fields]

Only the original search phrase was used for a second search. (All unnecessary words or phrases have been deleted within the original Search details box. See the difference between the two Query Translations boxes.)

Notice how PubMed uses both phrases ‘physician patient relationship’ (NO hyphen) and

Use the same steps to search the second topic:

You have participated in many discussions on the connection between the physician patient relationship (Topic #1) and patient satisfaction. (Topic #2) You are interested in finding well-written evidence-based articles on this topic.

*Use the Advanced Search Builder page to combine searches*

Your PubMed searches are temporarily found on the Advanced Search Builder page. (To permanently save the searches, use MyNCBI tools Recent Activity, Saved Searches or Collections.)

After all your searches are completed, start the combining process on the PubMed Advanced Search Builder page. Use the Advanced link to find Advanced Search Builder page.
All searches performed within an 8 hour period are found in the Search History section, identified by the search query, search number and number of results.

Combining searches using PubMed Advanced Search Builder: History
Searches can be combined, deleted or saved in your MyNCBI account by using its associated search number from the search History.

**LEFT** click the search number to display several different options:

- **AND in Builder** (combine searches using AND)
- **OR in Builder** (combine searches using OR)
- **NOT in Builder** (combine searches using NOT)
- **Delete from history**
- **Show search results**
- **Show search details**
- **Save in My NCBI**

An easy way to combine searches with **AND** is to use the **Add** link.
In the example below:

~ Both MeSH searches were combined (#23 AND #29), resulting in 3618 results. (Search #32)
~ Next, both Title field searches were combined (# 19 AND #27), resulting in 15 results. (Search #33)
~ To discover how many of the content searches (MeSH) have the search terms in the article title (Field: Title), **Searches #32 and #33** were combined, resulting in 10 results. (Search #34)

Click on the „Items found“ number for the corresponding search to see the specific search results.
Use the Limits link > Types of Articles to find the highest level of evidence.

**NOTE:** For assistance, refer to the section: “What levels of evidence are found in PubMed?”
The Systematic Review link is found in Subsets.