### Boolean Worksheet: A Medline/PubMed Search

#### Step 1: Choose **databases** that suit your research question

**Sample Search**

**Sample Research Question**: What is the evidence for using music therapy as an intervention to decrease patients’ preoperative anxiety.

**Recommended Databases:**
- CINAHLPlus
- Medline (via PubMed or Ovid)
- PsycINFO
- Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- JBI (Joanna Briggs Institute) EBP Database
- Scopus
- Web of Science
- Embase
- ProQuest Central
- Dissertations and Theses Global
- Other ________________________________

**Your Search**

**Your Research Question**: ______________________________________________________

**Recommended Databases:**
- CINAHLPlus
- Medline (via PubMed or Ovid)
- PsycINFO
- Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- JBI (Joanna Briggs Institute) EBP Database
- Scopus
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- Other ________________________________

#### Step 2: Perform a **simple keyword search**

Identify **keywords** that describe the important concepts in your research question. (For a PICO question, select keywords that describe your patient, problem or population and your chosen intervention)

**Sample Keywords**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1 (Patient or Problem or Population)</th>
<th>Concept 2 (Intervention)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preoperative patient</td>
<td>music therapy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Connecting keywords with **AND** in the database search retrieves article citations that contain **both** terms.

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For the sample search, we will start in PubMed.
Step 3: Expand your search with MeSH terms and other synonyms

From the initial search results, retrieve alternate terms/synonyms/MeSH subject terms for one or both concepts.

Combining these terms with OR expands the search to find citations with ANY of the added terms (Remember – OR retrieves MORE!)

Sample Synonyms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Concept 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preoperative</td>
<td>music therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perioperative</td>
<td>“acoustic stimulation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surgical procedures, operative</td>
<td>listening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A larger OR’d set of MeSH/keywords/synonyms may be recombined with AND to narrow the search

Your Synonyms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Concept 1</th>
<th>Your Concept 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TIP: Remember to nest OR’d synonyms with parentheses in your database search – e.g. (checklist OR checklists OR check list*)

Step 4: Add limits to your results

Most databases allow you to add “limits” or “filters” that restrict search results by criteria such as type of study, type of article, date, time factors, age group, etc.

In your search, look for database ‘filters’, limits’ or ‘refinements’ to narrow your search.

You may want to consider how you can apply the following filters to best suit your research needs:

Publication Type: clinical trial

Article Type: ________________

Date: ________________

Language: ________________

Age Group*: ________________

*Pro Tip: If you are looking for articles about a particular age group of patients, DO NOT include terms like ‘pediatric’ or ‘elderly’ in your search. DO use the standard age group filter that is available in many databases.

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