Health Sciences Literature Searching Strategies

This chart shows some possible searching strategies, depending on the type of study you are looking for. Select the type of information/study you are searching for from the top row. Follow the arrows to the lists of databases/resources to search.

Answers to Background Questions
(How many people have Multiple Sclerosis? How is it treated?)

Primary Studies
(Randomized Controlled Trial)

Secondary Studies
(Systematic Review, Practice Guideline)

Information on the Effectiveness of interventions
(treatment, diagnosis, screening)

Causal, prognosis, epidemiology studies

Critically Appraised Studies

Textbooks
(electronic and print)

MEDLINE,
Cochrane Central Register for Controlled Trials

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews,
Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects,
National Guideline Clearinghouse

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews,
Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects

MEDLINE
(Systematic Reviews Filter, Clinical Queries Filters)

ACP Journal Club,
Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects

MEDLINE
(Limit to Review Articles)

MEDLINE
(Systematic Reviews Filter)

MEDLINE
(Systematic Reviews Filter, Clinical Queries Filters)