CAPS I Searching Skills
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Objectives

- Students will be able to ...
  - Choose an appropriate resource for background and foreground questions
  - Locate print and electronic textbooks
  - Name three clinical tools
  - Use resources to determine lab values
Activity

1. What’s the difference between primary & secondary literature?

2. What’s a foreground question? What’s a background question?

3. How do you currently look for medical information?

4. What specific sources/resources do you use?
Comparing Literature

Primary Literature

- Original studies, unfiltered information
  - Journal articles (Randomized clinical trials, cohort studies, case report)
  - Directly reporting results of a study

Secondary Literature

- Synthesized or summarized
  - Journal articles (Review articles)
  - Textbooks (synthesis of existing knowledge)
Activity #1: Is It Primary or Secondary Lit? Why?


Background & Foreground Questions

- **Background Questions**
  - About physiology, pathology, epidemiology, and general management
  - Medical students
  - Answers in textbooks or other quick reference tools

- **Foreground Questions**
  - Asked when problem solving patient care
  - Seasoned clinicians
  - Keeping up to date on best care
  - Answers in the research literature & pre-appraised tools
Activity #2
Background/Foreground?

What kinds of questions are the following? What type of source would you want to consult to answer the following questions? Why?

1. What is the typical treatment for diabetes mellitus type 2?
2. What evidence exists for using St. John’s Wort to treat symptoms of depression in a 55-year-old woman who is post-menopausal?
3. In an infant with GERD are thickened feedings more effective than treatment with gastric acid suppressive medications to reduce acid reflux?
4. What are some of the signs and symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease?
Activity #3 Clinical Tools

1. Searching in your individual resource, complete these tasks:
   - Find out what kind of treatment is recommended for supportive (symptom-directed) care for chickenpox.
   - Find a photo of shingles.
   - Find several symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease.

2. Search any topic you like. Explore the tool’s features. What do you like? What looks useful?

3. In your groups, compare your answers from Step 1. Then, share features of the tool you explored.
Activity #4: MicroMedex

- For a 6-year old child with atopic dermatitis, what is the correct dosage of tacrolimus?
- Create a Drug Comparison (look for the tab along the top menu) for Alavert and Allegra.
  - What is the Strength of the Recommendation for the use of each for seasonal allergic rhinitis in adults?
  - What does that particular Strength of Recommendation rating mean?
  - What is the Strength of Evidence rating for this same usage?
  - What does that particular Strength of Evidence rating mean?
Activity #5: Lab Values

- Sources for finding lab values (on subject guide)
  1. Guide to Diagnostic Tests
  2. UI Pathology Lab Services Handbook

- Find the answer to this question: What’s the reference range for potassium (plasma) for an adult?
6S Hierarchy of Pre-Appraised Evidence

- **Systems**: Ideally, EMR integration of resources linking directly to research related to each specific patient.
- **Summaries**: Evidence-based textbook summaries & sources of clinical practice guidelines.
- **Synopses of Syntheses**: Sources that summarize syntheses (summaries of systematic reviews & meta-analyses).
- **Syntheses**: Sources of systematic reviews & meta-analyses.
- **Synopses of Studies**: Sources that summarize individual, high-quality studies.
- **Studies**: Sources of individual studies (article databases).


Time to publication increases
Examples of Resources for Each Level

**Systems**
- DynaMed Plus, BMJ Best Practice, MicroMedex, First Consult (ClinicalKey), Essential Evidence Plus (STAT!Ref), & maybe UpToDate
- NICE Clinical Guidelines, Use guidelines limits in other resources

**Summaries**
- OrthoEvidence (Meta), Cochrane Clinical Answers, Database of Abstracts of Reviews in Cochrane Library (ceased in 2015)
- Evidence abstraction journals (e.g. NEJM Journal Watch, ACP Journal Club)

**Syntheses**
- Cochrane Library, Campbell Library, Cochrane Review Group Sites, Evidence-based Practice Centers Evidence Based Reports (AHRQ)

**Synopses of Syntheses**
- OrthoEvidence (RCT), Evidence abstraction journals (e.g. NEJM Journal Watch, ACP Journal Club)

**Synopses of Studies**
- PubMed, Embase, CINAHL, PsycINFO, and others
  (use Clinical Queries filters for study types where available)

**Studies**

Time to publication increases