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# Searching ClinicalTrials.gov

This doc describes how to use Boolean search to retrieve records from ClinicalTrials.gov.

#### **Quick Start**

Use AND/OR/NOT, in combination with keywords to narrow in on trials of interest. For example:

dizziness AND NOT exhaustion AND stroke

will retrieve trials with the word "dizziness" and "stroke" contained *somewhere* in the record: the trial title, description, interventions, conditions, or several other fields; trials with "exhaustion" mentioned anywhere will be excluded from results. Use parentheses if the logical operators become numerous and ambiguous, and use guotes if your keywords contain spaces.

To generate a more precise search, use AREA to search specific fields. If you wanted to limit our search to only trials with these keywords as Conditions being studied:

AREA[ConditionSearch]dizziness AND NOT AREA[ConditionSearch]exhaustion AND AREA[ConditionSearch]stroke

The syntax for AREA searches is simply AREA[area name]search. Common area names include:

- BasicSearch: This is the default, when no AREA is specified. It searches all of the most common fields within trials
- ConditionSearch: Searches indexed conditions, condition MeSH terms, the title, and keywords
- InterventionSearch: Searches indexed interventions, intervention MeSH terms, arm labels, keywords, and more
- OutcomeSearch: Searches all outcome fields registered (Primary, Secondary, and Other)
- TitleSearch: Searches the trial name & acronym

In action, here we search for trials assessing mortality of stroke patients treated with the Trevo device:

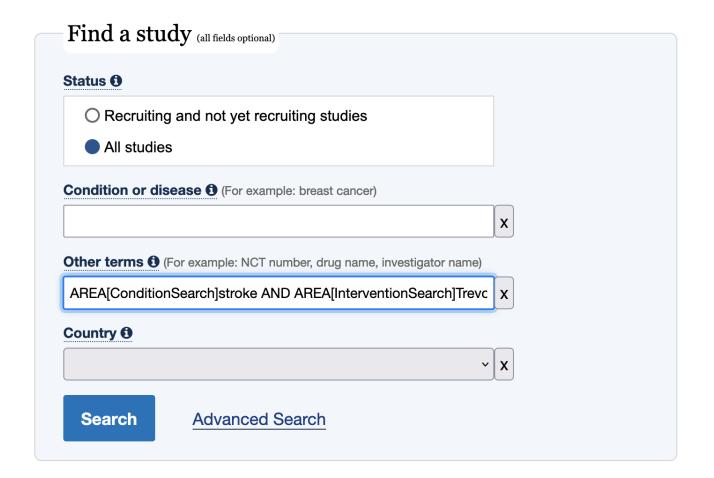
AREA[ConditionSearch]stroke AND AREA[InterventionSearch]Trevo AND AREA[OutcomeSearch]mortality

## **Testing your Search Before Import**

You may wish to inspect the quality or volume of results retrieved prior to running an API Import on Nested Knowledge. To test your search, copy paste the search string:

- For https://www.clinicaltrials.gov: Into the "Other Terms" text input
- For https://beta.clinicaltrials.gov/: Into the "Keywords" text input

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#### **AREAs**

ClinicalTrials.gov publishes a full list of AREAs that may be searched & which fields are included in that AREA here. While BasicSearch, ConditionSearch, InterventionSearch, and OutcomeSearch are most common, field-level AREAs like DesignAllocation and OverallStatus may be useful for certain review types or protocols. For example, to retrieve completed randomized trials of the Trevo device:

AREA[DesignAllocation]Randomized AND AREA[OverallStatus]Completed AND AREA[InterventionSearch]Trevo

### **Operators**

A full listing of operators may be found here. While AND/OR/NOT/()/""/AREA are expected to be most common, operators such as RANGE can prove useful. For example, to retrieve the most recent trials on COVID-19:

AREA[ConditionSearch]COVID-19 and AREA[StartDate]RANGE[01/01/2022, MAX]

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