

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 quotes if your keywords contain spaces.

To generate a more precise search than the Basic Search outlined above, 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 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 Running

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

Find a study (all fields optional)

Status ⓘ

- ☐ Recruiting and not yet recruiting studies
- ☒ All studies

Condition or disease ⓘ (For example: breast cancer)

X

Other terms ⓘ (For example: NCT number, drug name, investigator name)

X

Country ⓘ

▼X

Search

[Advanced Search](#)

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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