

Searching ClinicalTrials.gov

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



Video



To perform a ClinicalTrials.gov search into your nest, you can either 1. Write a query from scratch, or 2. Copy and paste the query from a search in ClinicalTrials.gov. Guidance for both options is given below.

How to write a ClinicalTrials.gov query

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 your 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's a search](#) for trials assessing mortality of stroke patients treated with the Trevo device:

AREA[ConditionSearch]stroke AND AREA[InterventionSearch]Trevi 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 into <https://www.clinicaltrials.gov> in the “Other Terms” text input. Note that if you are using “[Classic ClinicalTrials.gov](#)” (will be going offline in 2024), results will be different (+/- 1% in our experience), due to searching differences between the versions. Nested Knowledge API integration uses the newer version.

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)

AREA[ConditionSearch]stroke AND AREA[InterventionSearch]Trevi

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]
```

Alternative Option: Copy Query from ClinicalTrials.gov

If you have already performed a search in ClinicalTrials.gov, and simply want to copy that query into Literature Search so it continues updating on your schedule, follow these steps:

1. Input search terms as normal and click "Search"

Find a study (all fields optional)

Status ⓘ

☐ Recruiting and not yet recruiting studies

☒ All studies

Condition or disease ⓘ (For example: breast cancer)

Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2

X

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

ACE inhibitor

X

Country ⓘ

India

▼

X

City ⓘ

X

Distance ⓘ

▼

Search

Advanced Search

1. In the search bars at the top click “Advanced Search”

Home > Search Results

Hide Search

Start Over

Condition or disease ⓘ

Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2

X

Other terms ⓘ

ACE inhibitor

X

Country ⓘ

India

▼

X

City ⓘ

X

Distance ⓘ

▼

Search

Advanced Search

1. Then click “Expert Search” in the top right

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Advanced Search

Search of: ACE inhibitor | Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2 | India - Modify Search

Expert Search

Fill in any or all of the fields below. Click on the label to the left of each search field for more information or read the [Help](#)

Advanced Search

Search

Help

1. Your query will then be displayed in the correct format. Copy and paste this into the automatic search in NK.

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Standard Search

Modify your search using expert search syntax.

Note: The ClinicalTrials.gov search syntax is being updated to match the ClinicalTrials.gov application programming interface (API) [search syntax](#). Documentation and interactive examples of the new syntax can be found on the [ClinicalTrials.gov API web site](#). The current syntax will continue to work, but will not be updated to support new features.

Expert Search

ACE inhibitor AND AREA[ConditionSearch] Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2 AND SEARCH[Location] EXPAND[Term] COVER[FullMatch] (AREA[LocationPath] "IN" AND (AREA[LocationCountry] "India" OR CONST[0.95]))

Integration with NK

You can conduct searches of clinicaltrials.gov on the [search](#) module of the NK platform. Results from this search will automatically mark papers as [related reports](#).

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