Embase Help

These notes are to help you to exploit the features of Embase. To make navigation easier they are divided into the sections listed below.

Contents

What is Embase? .................................................................................................................................................. 1
Boolean Logic – AND, OR NOT – and proximity searching using NEAR and NEXT ............................................. 2
Emtree- the indexing language of Embase (the equivalent of MeSH in PubMed) .................................................. 3
Field Names – essential for accurate searching .................................................................................................. 4
Using Subheadings .............................................................................................................................................. 5
Phrase Searching in Embase – some rules to remember ....................................................................................... 5
Types of publication indexed for Embase – a list .................................................................................................. 6
Wildcard and Truncation Symbols - used in Embase ............................................................................................ 6
Limits – to apply when you’ve completed your search – includes publication date, age groups, language limits, and study types .............................................................................................................. 7
Excluding Duplicate Medline Records – when you’ve already searched PubMed .............................................. 8
Saving Searches .................................................................................................................................................... 8
Shared search folder – to allow others to access your search ............................................................................. 8
Email Alerts- to keep you up to date .................................................................................................................. 9
Exporting Results to EndNote .......................................................................................................................... 10

What is Embase?

Embase is a database which covers international biomedical literature from 1947 to the present day, and includes published proceedings and conference abstracts.

It is made up of content merged from three databases:

- **Embase**, the Excerpta Medica database from Elsevier – 1974 to present

- **Embase Classic** (Excerpta Medica Abstract Journals backfile) – 1947-1973

- **Medline**, from the U.S. National Library of Medicine, including current Medline (1966 onward) plus OldMedline (back to 1950)

Although MEDLINE records produced by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) are included the most recent unindexed material from PubMed is NOT included.
**Boolean Logic**

Embase has more Boolean search options than Medline, using **AND**, **OR**, **NOT**, **NEAR** and **NEXT**.

**AND**, **OR** and **NOT** operate in the same way that they do in PubMed.

An explanation of the use of the proximity operators **NEAR** and **NEXT** is below.

Proximity operators let you search for words or phrases at any specified distance from each other.

**NEAR/n**

This will find terms within a specified number (n) of words from each other in either direction.

**Cardiac NEAR/5 catheter** would find the two words within five words of each other in either direction:

"Despite complicated cardiac anatomy, catheter ablation of ."

"... patients undergoing catheter ablation for cardiac arrhythmias ...."

"... a continuous thermodilution cardiac output pulmonary artery catheter."

**Note:** If you want to add a field name to your proximity searches make sure you enclose the search terms in parentheses.

(cardiac NEAR/5 catheter):ti,ab

**NEXT/n**

This will find terms within a specified number (n) of words from each other in the order you typed them.

**hip NEXT/3 prosthesis** would find the two words within three words of each other, but hip would always have to come first.

"... rheumatoid arthritis, joint surgery, hip or knee prosthesis ..."

"metal on metal hip resurfacing, prosthesis failure (complication, diagnosis)...

**Note:** If you want to add a field name to your proximity searches make sure you enclose the search terms in parentheses.

(hip NEXT/3 prosthesis):ti,ab
**Emtree**

What is Emtree (and why do I need to know)?

Like Medline Embase has its own thesaurus of indexing terms. This is called **Emtree**, and is a hierarchically structured, controlled vocabulary - the equivalent of Medline’s **MeSH**. Each journal article included in Embase is indexed with terms from the Emtree thesaurus to represent its subject content.

Emtree is where the real search power of Embase lies, so it’s worth taking a few minutes to understand how it works. It has a hierarchical structure, very like the MeSH thesaurus in PubMed, with the ability to “explode” terms to search for more specific subcategories.

Example:

'neoplasm'/de - will find articles on neoplasms as a general category, but **NOT** specific neoplasms

'neoplasm'/exp - will find articles on neoplasms as a general category, **AS WELL AS** articles on specific categories of neoplasms listed below the main heading

Each Emtree term will also have a list of synonyms (the equivalent of the Entry Terms you find in MeSH), and these can be searched in titles and abstracts of articles.
**Field Names**

Like Medline, Embase has a variety of searchable Fields. These are an extremely useful aid in improving the accuracy of your searches. In fact they are essential for higher degree searching.

Some of the most commonly used are:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author's Name</td>
<td>au</td>
<td>'gold a':au</td>
<td>'gold a':au retrieves all authors named A. Gold, with or without middle initials; truncation character not needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'gold a p':au</td>
<td>'gold a p':au retrieves only authors with both initials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Title</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>bioterrorism:ti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ab</td>
<td>bioterrorism:ab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index term</td>
<td>de</td>
<td>There are two options here:-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Emtree subject descriptor)</td>
<td></td>
<td>/de – to search for an exact Emtree heading</td>
<td>neoplasm/dep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>:de - to search for words or phrases anywhere in an Emtree heading</td>
<td>neoplasm:de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explosion</td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>neoplasm/exp</td>
<td>This will retrieve narrower, more specific terms in the subject tree, as well as the general term neoplasm. It will NOT search Synonyms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Emtree index term)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full list is at https://service.elsevier.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/17331/supporthub/embase/p/10882/#fieldcodes

A word or phrase can be searched in multiple fields simultaneously

- e.g. "cancer gene therapy":de,ti,ab will search for the phrase in Emtree, in titles of articles, or in abstracts of articles.

To search a word or a phrase in ALL FIELDS simply type it into the search box, and TURN OFF MAPPING
Using Subheadings

Subheadings are searched as two-letter qualifier codes with drug terms \textit{(dd)} or medical terms \textit{(dm)}. Subheadings and their abbreviations are listed at \textit{drug subheadings, routes of drug administration} and \textit{disease subheadings}. They can be searched alone or in groups (separated with commas); major or explosion can also be added.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{e.g.} ‘colon cancer’/\textit{dm} \_\textit{dt}
  \item fluorouracil/\textit{dd} \_\textit{ae},\textit{dd} \_\textit{it},\textit{dd} \_\textit{to}
  \item ‘antineoplastic agent’/\textit{exp/\textit{dd} pk/mj}
\end{itemize}

Subheadings can also be searched alone as “free-floating” or “floating” subheadings; i.e. not attached to a specific index term, using \textit{lnk}.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{e.g.} ‘adverse drug reaction’:\textit{lnk}
  \item prevention:\textit{ink} and [2009]/\textit{py}
\end{itemize}

Phrase Searching in Embase

Enclose phrases in quotation marks (it doesn’t matter whether they are single or double quotes, as long as they match). If quotes are omitted, each word is mapped separately and unmapped words are searched as free text, and combined with a Boolean AND, resulting in potentially irrelevant hits.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{heart attacks} is searched as \textit{heart AND attacks} - and the two words may be nowhere near one another
  \item "\textit{heart attacks}" is searched as "\textit{heart attacks}" - \textit{in other words, only that exact phrase will be found}
  \item Hyphens are also interpreted as phrases
  \item \textit{well-being} is searched not only as a hyphenated word, but also as the phrase "\textit{well being}"
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{NOTE:} Wildcards (truncation symbols) \textbf{can now be used within phrases}
\end{itemize}
Types of publication indexed for Embase:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article</td>
<td>Original research or opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article in Press</td>
<td>Introduced in 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference abstract</td>
<td>Abstract or poster item presented at a conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference paper</td>
<td>Full report of material presented at a conference including published conference summaries, but excluding conference abstracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference review</td>
<td>Review summarising conference abstracts presented at a single conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>Providing a summary of one or more articles in a journal issue, or providing general editorial news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erratum</td>
<td>Report of an error, correction or retraction of a previously published paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Letter to or correspondence with the editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note</td>
<td>Item defined as a note in a journal, also including discussions and commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Significant review of original research, usually with an extensive bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short survey</td>
<td>Short, or mini-review of original research; usually shorter, and with a less extensive bibliography than a review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wildcard and Truncation Symbols

In Embase three options are available.

* An asterisk allows for variable truncation, and can be used either within a word, or at the end of a word. It can allow for any number of characters or the absence of a character
  
  *sulfur* - retrieves *sulfur*, *sulphur*  
  *catheter* - retrieves *catheter*, *catheters*, *catheterization*, *catheter-assisted*

? A question mark allows for only one character. It does not allow for the absence of a character
  
  *sulfi?nyl* retrieves records that contain words like 'sulfonyl' and 'sulfinyl'

$ A dollar sign can be used to allow for a character, or the absence of a character
  
  *group*$ retrieves records that contain group OR groups  
  *colo$r* finds the words color or colour

- **NOTE:** Any combination of wildcards (truncation symbols) can now be used within phrases
**Limits**

Limits are best applied once a search is completed, and include publication dates, publication types, areas of focus, languages, patient age groups, gender, etc.

The limit options listed on the Results page are not comprehensive, so for some categories it's best to check Emtree. For example, if you look up Types of Study in Emtree you will find many more options than appear under Study Types on the Results page.

The two limits you are most likely to use are probably:

**Date limits**:
- /py (publication year range),
- /sd ('since date') and
- /wd ('within date').

Formats for /sd and /wd are YYYY/MM/DD.

Examples:

- Reviews on AIDS published within the last 5 years
  `'aids'/mj AND [review]/lim and [2005-2009]/py`

- Papers by oncologist J.C. Smith indexed since mid-2002
  `'smith j.c.':/au AND [cancer]/lim and [01/07/2002]/sd`

- Articles from the last 14 days from the journal *Cell*
  `'cell'/jt AND [14]/wd`

If you attempt to use the date limits from the Results page, prefer the Date tab on the toolbar at the top of the screen. If you use the date limits from the Text Filters column on the left of the screen, you'll need to click on the Graphics option at the top of the left hand column. Otherwise your only option will be to click on every individual year!

**Language Limits**:

Example:

- "cancer gene therapy":de AND english:la

There is also a Languages option tab on the toolbar at the top of the Results page.

**Age Limits**

These can be searched as Emtree terms, or applied as limits using the Age tab in the toolbar at the top of the Results page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embryo – First trimester</td>
<td>Adolescent – 13 to 17 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetus - second/third trimester</td>
<td>Young adult - 18 to 24 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newborn – up to one month</td>
<td>Adult – 18 to 64 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant – 1 to 12 months</td>
<td>Middle aged – 45 to 64 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool child – 1 to 6 years</td>
<td>Aged – 65+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School child - 7 to 12 years</td>
<td>Very elderly – aged 80 and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child – 1 to 12 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Excluding Duplicate Medline Records

Embase includes Medline records from 1996 onwards. However if you have already searched PubMed, you may wish to exclude Medline results from your search in Embase.

**AND [embase]/lim**

This will include records for articles indexed by BOTH Embase and Medline, but exclude articles indexed only for Medline

**NOT [medline]/lim**

This will exclude ALL Medline records (including articles indexed by BOTH Embase and Medline)

Saving Searches

- Login (You will need to register to save searches and to set up email alerts.)
- When you have performed the search, click in the checkbox on the left in your Session Results.
- Click Save. The dialog box which now opens, prompts you to select a folder in which to save your search.
- **You can save searches in any folder other than the Root Folder.** I’d suggest you create a new folder called Saved Searches, and keep all subsequent saved searches there.
- Give a name to your search
- Click on the name of the folder to which you want to save your search.
- Click on Save

More detailed help on saving searches is available from Elsevier


Shared search folder

Saving a search in this folder allows other users to see it, as all searches in this folder may be viewed by everyone within the specified IP range for your institution. All Embase users may save searches here, if they would like to share with others in their institution. All searches may be viewed by all users in the same institution, but only the originator of the search may delete or make changes to the search. Sub-folders may be added to the main Shared searches folder.
Email Alerts

You can set email alerts either from Session Results or from Saved Search pages.

- Login (You will need to register to save searches and to set up email alerts.)

- From the Session Results page, select the search you want to set as an alert and click the envelope icon. It will appear to the right of the screen near your search result count.

- The Set email alert pop-up box opens, prompting you to assign a subject (a name for the alert) and to specify email addresses to which it should be sent.

- Click the drop-down frequency menu to choose from the following options: every day, every week, every month, every two months, every three months, every six months and every year.
  - For weekly alerts you can choose the day of the week you want the alert to be sent.
  - For monthly alerts you can choose the day of the month you want the alert to be sent.
• Type in the name of the alert.

• Enter the email address to which the alert is to be sent, for multiple email addresses use ";" as a separator. This information can be edited at any time in Alert Details text box.

• There are two options for email alert format: html and plain text. Select your preferred email format by clicking the radio button.

• Choose the citation format option: Citations Only, Citations and Index Terms, Citations and Abstracts, Citations Abstracts and Index Terms, or Full record.

For Citations Only format, the limit is 500 records. If your search has produced more than 500 records, you may follow a link to view all results in Embase.

If you select Citations and Abstract format, the first 25 results will be sent by email and you may follow the link provided to see the remaining records in Embase.

• Choose whether you want to include articles in press or in process in your alert

• Click on Set Email Alert

**Exporting Results to EndNote**

• At the Session Results screen, select the result set you want, and click on View Results

• Select individual references or multiple results using radio buttons after Selected

• Click the Export option in the blue bar above the list of results

• Choose Export format - RIS format (Reference Manager, ProCite, EndNote)

• Click on Export - at the bottom of the export format box

• At the Ready for download screen - click on Download

• Select Open