Searching for the Evidence

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Hang on! I keep entering a search for “squishy red orb next to the lungs,” and this dumb browser keeps taking me to sites for rubber balls, Silly Putty, and chew toys.
Objectives

- Identify the University of Washington Health Sciences Library information resources available to students, faculty, and staff
- Identify best practices for evidence-based searching
- Identify how to evaluate information found online
- Identify additional information resources available to non-UW health professionals and to caregivers
Background versus Foreground Questions

Background...
Questions asked to fill a knowledge gap
- What is...?
- What do I do in this situation?

Foreground...
Questions asked in order to make clinical decisions
- Will X or Y produce a better outcome?
- What is the impact of doing X compared to Y?
Hierarchy of Research Design
Selection of Databases

Think about...

- Specialization/Subject Matter
- Access to databases
- Indexing
Boolean Operators

AND

Retrieves articles only about diet’s impact on autism.
Boolean Operators

OR

Retrieves articles about autism, diet, but terms may not coexist in the same article.
Best Practice for Searching

- Broad search
- Alternate terms
- Boolean operators and limits
- Multiple resources

All of this depends on your question.
Truncation

- Used with keyword searching
- Used to find word variations
- Careful with too short a root
  - Child* - results in over 600 variations in PubMed
- Almost always an * (asterisk) in most databases
When do I use...

Keywords?
- Quick search
- New terminology
- Acronyms
- Truncation
- Combined with controlled vocabulary

Controlled Vocabulary?
- Deeper search
- Established content
- Acronyms
- Combined with keywords
- More control (Major topic and/or subheadings)
Example of a PICOT and Clinical Question

PICO(T)

P: Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
I: Nutritional supplements
C: None or standard of care
O: Decreased severity of symptoms
T: Clinical Question

Do children with Autism Spectrum Disorder who are given nutritional supplements demonstrate a decrease in symptoms of autistic behavior?
What if my results are too...

**Broad?**
- Check your clinical question
- Add limits
- Add another term

**Narrow?**
- Check your clinical question
- Remove limits
- Remove a term or terms

Ask a Librarian!
But I am not affiliated with the University of Washington...
HEALWA

heal-wa.org
HEALWA Eligible Health Professionals

1. Chiropractors
2. Dietitians
3. East Asian Medicine Practitioners
4. Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists
5. Marriage & Family Therapy Associates
6. Licensed Practical Nurses
7. Massage Therapists
8. Mental Health Counselors
9. Midwives
10. Naturopathic Physicians
11. Nutritionists
12. Occupational Therapists
13. Occupational Therapy Assistants
14. Optometrists
15. Osteopathic Physicians
16. Osteopathic Physician Assistants
17. Physicians
18. Physician Assistants
19. Podiatric Physicians
20. Psychologists
21. Registered Nurses
22. Social Workers
23. Clinical Social Work Associates
24. Speech Language Pathologists
How do I know if what I find is good evidence?
The CRAAP Test

- Currency
- Relevance
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Purpose

Does this source pass the CRAAP Test?

Evaluating Information - Applying the CRAAP Test
http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf
Currency

The timeliness of the information.

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has the information been revised or updated?
- Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work as well?
- Are the links functional?

Evaluating Information - Applying the CRAAP Test
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Relevance

The importance of the information for your needs.

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the information at an appropriate level (i.e. not too basic or advanced for your needs)?
- Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining this is one you will use?
- Would you be comfortable citing this source in your research paper?

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Authority

The source of the information.

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
- What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations?
- Is the author qualified to write on the topic?
- Is there contact information, such as a publisher or email address?
- Does the URL reveal anything about the author or source? Examples: .com .edu .gov .org .net
Accuracy

The reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.

- Where does the information come from?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been reviewed or refereed?
- Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?
- Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
- Are there spelling, grammar or typographical errors?
Purpose

The reason the information exists.

- What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
- Do the authors/sponsors make their intentions or purpose clear?
- Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
- Does the point of view appear objective and impartial?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?

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Health on the Net

HONcode Principles:
▶ Authority
▶ Complementarity
▶ Privacy Policy
▶ Attribution and date

▶ Justifiability
▶ Transparency
▶ Financial Disclosure
▶ Advertising policy

Health On the Net Foundation
Non Governmental Organization
www.healthonnet.org

HON Code
Patient or Caregiver Information
Finding the evidence...

- Is a caffeine supplement useful for young children with suspected or diagnosed ADHD?
- Is a gluten-free, dairy-free diet helpful for treating symptoms of Autism in a child?
- What are the consequences of screen time for children under 18 months of age?
- Is a child living in a bilingual home (or home where more than one spoken language is spoken) at greater risk for language delays?
- Does wearing a weighted vest in the classroom improve a child’s task attendance and performance in the classroom?
- Does use of infant walkers help infants learn to walk earlier?
- Does participation in physical activity for youth with disabilities improve their social skills or ability to focus and attend?
- Is there evidence that early detection and treatment of congenital hearing loss impacts communication development in children?
- Children spend a lot of time listening in noisy places at home, in the community and in school. Do children have a harder time listening and learning in noise?
Questions?

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