International Pharmaceutical Abstracts (IPA)

What is International Pharmaceutical Abstracts?

- An online database produced in conjunction with the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.
- A comprehensive collection of information on drug use and development from 1971 to current.
- Allows you to find journal articles published in more than 850 pharmaceutical journals.
- In some cases IPA will link to full-text electronic copies of articles.
- The best place to look for articles on pharmacy practice and other drug-related health topics.

Searching International Pharmaceutical Abstracts

The example below illustrates a step-by-step search for articles on pharmacist prescribing in the community/retail setting.

Therefore, the two main concepts are:

- pharmacist prescribing
- community or retail

1. Type one of the major concepts from your topic into the search box.
2. Click on **Search** to continue.

3. Enter terms to describe another concept from your topic and click on **Search**.

   - The operator "Or" allows either word to appear in each record in your search results. "Or" broadens your search by letting you search for related terms or synonyms.
4. Combine the two searches by selecting their checkboxes in **Search History**.

5. Because you want to find articles on both of these concepts, click on the **And** button to combine them (If you wanted to find articles on either topic, you would use "Or").

**Strategies to Improve Your Search in IPA**

1. **Truncation:**
   Use the "$" to find all words with a particular word root. For example, *depress*$ will retrieve records that contain the words *depression, depressed,* and *depressive*. Be careful what you truncate though, because you may end up with a huge number of results. For example, *pharm*$ will retrieve *pharmacy, pharmacist, pharmacokinetics, pharmaceutical, pharmacotherapy,* etc.

2. **Use of synonyms:**
   Think of other ways to express your concept, and combine these with "OR". For example, *motion sickness OR travel sickness.*

3. **Use of the generic name:**
   If you are looking for a drug, make sure that you search the generic name rather than the brand name, since brand names vary from product to product and country to country. Sometimes a drug has more than one generic name; in this case, combine these with "OR".
Search Results

6. The results of your combined search are displayed at the bottom of the screen. Click on Abstract Reference or Complete Reference to get more information about articles of interest.

7. Click on the Find it! button to see if the article is available in print or electronic format from the University Library.
8. If you wish to obtain an article from a journal that the University Library does not own, select the Interlibrary Loan option on the Find it! page. To submit a request, click on Go.

Note: Some records in IPA are Abstracts of Meeting Presentations. In this case, the author has not written an article; the abstract is all that is available. Therefore, there is no need to order these items through Interlibrary Loan.

For further assistance please phone 966-6024 or drop into the Health Sciences Library

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