



HDHL 440:

Researching Epidemiologic Issues – Library Resources & Services

Start here: <http://guides.lib.montana.edu/epidemiology>

Brainstorm terminology related to epidemiologic studies:

disease	incidence	prevalence	
exposure	outcome	study	
distribution	determinants	cause	
population	observation	surveillance	
hypothesis	risk	occurrence	
demographics			<i>other?</i>

Brainstorm ways to articulate your topic in combination with one or more of the above terms:

Example:

What is the **incidence** of induced **abortion** among **teenage** girls from **low income Hispanic** families?

Incidence	abortion	teens
Prevalence	pregnancy loss	teenagers
Risk	termination of pregnancy	adolescents
Occurrence		adolescence
Correlates		

Hispanic	low income
Latina(s)	poor
Latino(s)	poverty
Demographic characteristics	socioeconomic status
race	
ethnic differences	

Sample search in PsycInfo or Sociological Abstracts or Social Services Abstracts:

and	(incidence	or	prevalence	or	risk)	Keywords, KW=	▼
	(abortion	or	termination of pregnancy	or	pregnancy loss)	Keywords, KW=	▼
	(low income	or	poverty	or	socioeconomic status)	Keywords, KW=	▼
	(hispanic	or	latina*	or	latino*)	Anywhere	▼

[Search Tips:](#) e.g., wildcar*, exact phrase; use Keywords for a single search of Title, Abstract, Descriptors

Search **Clear**

NOTE: some of the databases don't provide multiple search boxes connected by OR so you can either include the OR in your own searches or you can run several searches in which you alternate terms for each part of your research question:

Sample search in Web of Knowledge database using OR to connect alternative terms in one search box:

Search for:

	<input type="text" value="incidence OR prevalence or risk"/>	in	<input type="text" value="Topic"/>
	<i>Example: oil spill* mediterranean</i>		
AND	<input \"pregnancy="" loss\""="" of="" or="" pregnancy\"="" termination="" type="text" value="abortion OR \"/>	in	<input type="text" value="Topic"/>
	<i>Example: oil spill* mediterranean</i>		
AND	<input type="text" value="hispanic* OR latina* OR latino*"/>	in	<input type="text" value="Topic"/>
	<i>Example: oil spill* mediterranean</i>		
	Add Another Field >>		

Sample search in Web of Knowledge database using single terms:

Search for:

	<input type="text" value="incidence"/>	in	<input type="text" value="Topic"/>
	<i>Example: oil spill* mediterranean</i>		
AND	<input type="text" value="abortion"/>	in	<input type="text" value="Topic"/>
	<i>Example: oil spill* mediterranean</i>		
AND	<input type="text" value="hispanic*"/>	in	<input type="text" value="Topic"/>
	<i>Example: oil spill* mediterranean</i>		
	Add Another Field >>		

NOTE: In both of these examples in Web of Knowledge, the asterisk (*) is used as a truncation symbol in order to retrieve singular or plural forms of Hispanic(s). The asterisk is a fairly universal truncation symbol, so you can use it most other databases to retrieve multiple forms of a word: adolescen* ---- would retrieve adolescent, adolescents, adolescence

What's the biggest secret to successful research? Being creative and experimenting with various ways to articulate your search. And finally, if you get stuck, ask for help from a friendly librarian!

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