

Getting the Best Results

Select the appropriate search form:

Use this search form...	... for this type of search
Advanced Search form	non drug or disease related searches
Drug Search form	specific drug related information
Disease Search form	specific disease related information
Field Search form	author searching or for free-text searching in fields such as Title and Abstract
Article Search form	find a specific article based on the citation information you have at hand

Using EMTREE to construct your search:

- ▶ EMTREE organizes terms in a hierarchy or tree structure. Any term lower in the tree than the term you are viewing is called a **narrower** term. An **explosion** search includes these narrower terms in your search.
- ▶ Consider looking in EMTREE before deciding on your search strategy. This will help you find the best terms for your search.
- ▶ The **'Extensive Search'** option on the **Quick Search** form will automatically map search terms to EMTREE.
- ▶ The **'Map to preferred terminology'** feature on the **Advanced, Drug and Disease Search** forms converts a free text search to a controlled EMTREE thesaurus term search. Search results will include all articles where the EMTREE preferred term was indexed by the indexers, regardless of how the author referred to it.
- ▶ Synonyms are captured in EMTREE, so using a synonym of the EMTREE preferred term will retrieve the same results as using the preferred term, when mapping is enabled.

Free Text Searches using terms not in EMTREE:

If a broader EMTREE term is not suitable, then consider a free text search from the Quick or Advanced Search form with the following rules:

What you want to do	Example	Search Tool
Search a phrase	'heart attack'	Use single (') or double (") quotes to denote a phrase
Use a wildcard	sulf?nyl catheter? sul*r cat*	? – denotes zero or one variable character * - denotes any number of variable characters, including none

Important: Wildcards **cannot** be used in phrase searches.

Find words close to each other	'acetylation *5 histones'	*n – where n equals the maximum number of words separating your search terms, in the order entered
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Important: A proximity operator can only be used in a phrase search.

Search for words in a specific field of the database record	'breast cancer':ti 'breast cancer':ti,ab	: xx – where xx is the two-letter code assigned to a field : ti – article title : ab – abstract : au – author : ti,ab – article title or abstract
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For more comprehensive results:

- Make sure that EMTREE **preferred term mapping** is on so that you find the maximum number of records possible, this is all records indexed with your search terms and all the synonyms.
- **Explode** a search term or phrase to include all the EMTREE narrower terms by selecting **'Include sub-terms/derivatives'** on the Advanced, Drug and Disease search forms
- Use the **'Also search as keyword'** option on the Advanced, Drug and Disease search forms to free text search all index fields
- **Expand** your **date range**

For more focused results:

- Click on **'More Limits'** near the bottom of the Advanced, Drug and Disease search forms to access an extensive range of limit options
- **De-select the 'Include sub-terms/derivatives' (explosion search) box** on the Advanced, Drug and Disease search forms
- Use **Drug or Disease Subheadings** or **Routes of Drug Administration** on the Drug and Disease search forms
- Restrict your EMTREE search to **'major concepts'** only by selecting the **'major focus'** option on the Advanced, Drug and Disease search forms
- Limit your searches to **specific index fields** using the Field search form
- Use the **'Sort by relevance'** option on the results page to identify the most relevant results quickly and easily
- Click on **Edit** from your session results list and choose any of the EMBASE.com limits to further refine your search strategy

Additional Search Tips:

- **Break up your search** into individual topics and combine the sets at the end. It will be easier to identify the part of your strategy that is adversely impacting your search results
- When editing searches, familiarity with **Exact Search/Command Line Search syntax** is useful. Refer to the online help in EMBASE.com (look for the question marks) for a list of index field codes and sub-heading codes
- When editing searches, remember to **amend or delete the date range or other unwanted limits** from your strategy before adding a new date range or alternative limits
- Look at the **EMTREE index** terms of relevant records for possible index terms that you haven't yet considered
- Scan titles and/or abstracts for **alternative search terms**
- View a relevant record from your search results and click on **'Related Articles'**



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