Research Skills
Nature Care Library – 2019

Important:

Explore the concept and related terminology before you decide on the most appropriate approach or search terms.
- o Have a clear understanding of the task, and what the lecturer is trying to assess.
- o Keep to the task!

What is out there?

- Libraries, including their physical and online collections
- Internet (Wikipedia / Google scholar / Google Advanced search/ PubMed / Cochrane Library)
- Online Databases

How do I get it? Some examples…

- ILL (Inter Library Loan) – through local Libraries
- PubMed – some articles are open source, others need to be purchased
- Cochrane Library – online collection of medical evidence-based databases, including results of medical trials, reviews etc. Free to use in Australia.
- Databases – usually full text and fairly extensive collections. But…not all journals are included and specific topics may not be covered by all databases.
  Databases can be found via Nature Care College, local libraries, State Library, some associations etc.

Is the information authentic and creditable?

- Can the author be validated?
  (Is their name fully published? Is it trackable? What is their background? Are they just voicing their own opinion? What are their qualifications?)
- Is the publisher/publishing institution well known and accepted?
- Is the date of publication revealed? Is it current? And is it relevant to your topic?
- If it is a website, what is its purpose? Is it biased? Trying to sell products?
- Is the information of a 'primary' nature or a 'secondary' nature?
- If secondary, are the references of quality, and are they disclosed? Fully cited and trackable?

What are primary and secondary sources?

- **Examples of primary sources** are diaries, letters, original documents (birth certificate etc), interviews, speeches, case law, journal articles on NEW research or findings, government documents, creative artworks.
- **Examples of secondary sources** are journal articles that comment on or analyse research, textbooks, dictionaries/encyclopaedias, dissertations, critics.

Nature Care Library Resources

Books
Journals
DVD's
Digital files
Online Databases

Using a database

Download the Database Password sheet from your Moodle or request it from the library. It includes instructions on how to access the library catalogue and databases.
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Database Search Strategies:

Wide or basic search
  - o useful to see if there is much published on your topic
  - o use 'keyword' search term

More specific search
  - o use Advanced Search option and two or more 'keyword' search terms

Most specific search
  - o use subject headings
    (Subject heading schemes – LCSH (Library of Congress Subject Headings) and MeSH (Medical Subject Headings)
    BUT how do you know what term is actually a 'subject heading'? Look them up in your Advanced Search section in ProQuest

Limit results by narrowing the publication date, subject, publication title etc.