An Introduction to Using CINAHL
Through EBSCOhost

What is CINAHL?

CINAHL stands for the Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature and is the largest and most in-depth nursing research database. The CINAHL Plus with Full Text database provides full text for 768 journals, and indexing for 5,000 journals from the fields of nursing and allied health. The database contains 3,800,000 records. Offering complete coverage of English-language nursing journals and publications from the National League for Nursing and the American Nurses’ Association, CINAHL covers nursing, biomedicine, health sciences librarianship, alternative/complementary medicine, consumer health and 17 allied health disciplines.

In addition, this database provides full text for more than 275 books/monographs, with full text coverage dating back to 1937, as well as citations for nursing dissertations, 170 full text CEUs, selected conference proceedings, standards of practice, educational software, audiovisuals, books and book chapters. CINAHL provides full text for evidence-based care sheets, quick lessons, clinical innovations, critical paths, drug records, research instruments and clinical trials. Searchable cited references for more than 1,400 journals are also included.

PreCINAHL is included and provides current awareness of new journal articles. It consists of a rotating file of limited bibliographic information (no subject indexing) that is available to researchers only while these articles are being indexed. This enables users to gain access to article citations that otherwise would not be available.

How do I access CINAHL?

1. Open a web page and type in the Library homepage address http://www.napavalley.edu/library

2. From the McCarthy Library homepage, look for the “Find Articles and Databases Link”
3. Scroll down to locate the Health databases. You’ll see CINAHL Plus with Full Text. Double-click on the hyperlink to open the database.

4. To access CINAHL from home, remember the following username & password:

   Username: nvclibrary
   Password: books
Searching in CINAHL

Creating an Advanced Search

1. On the Advanced Search Screen, type search words or phrases in the boxes to conduct a search. Use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) to combine search terms.

2. (Optional) Choose the field(s) you want to search from the “Select a Field” boxes.

3. (Optional) Use Limiters, located below the search boxes, to narrow your search to the date, title, author, or publication name. (See screenshot on next page)
   - **Published Date** – Limit search results to specific date ranges.
   - **Publication** – Limit search results to records from a specific title.
   - **Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals** or **Research Article** – Limit results to scholarly sources.
   - **Publication Type** – Limit results to source types such as Clinical Trial, Evidence-Based Care Sheet, Meta Analysis, Meta Synthesis, Nursing Diagnoses, Nursing Interventions, Questionnaire/Scale, Randomized Controlled Trial, Research, etc. Scroll down in the box to see the full list of types. You can select multiple items either by holding down the control key (Ctrl) on a PC, or the Apple button on a Mac.
   - **Any Author is Nurse** or **First Author is Nurse** – Limit results to documents with nurses as the authors.
4. Select your limiters and then, click on the **Search** button.
Tips for Refining your Search

1. To narrow the focus of your search, browse through the “Refine Results” area on the left. For more limits options, click on the Show More link to get a pop-up window of limiters. Select the limiters you want to apply to your search, then click Search for a more focused result list.

2. When a phrase is enclosed by double quotations marks, the exact phrase is searched, e.g. “quality of life”

3. Use an asterisk * or question mark ? to retrieve variations on a word, e.g. transplant* will retrieve records that include “transplanting” and “transplantation.” You may use a question mark to replace one character, e.g. wom?n will retrieve both “women” and “woman.”

Locating the Full Text of Articles

- If available, click on the “PDF Full Text” or “HTML Full Text” links under the citation. This will take you to the article.
Optional Search Techniques and Other Tools

CINAHL Headings - see if there are any relevant search terms for you to use.

The CINAHL Headings List (controlled vocabulary or thesaurus). In many cases, the most efficient way to search is by using these headings which are the terms used to assign subject headings to the articles in the database. Not all concepts have a CINAHL Heading assigned to them. You will see these called Subjects, Subject: Major Heading, Major Subjects, and Minor Subjects in the results and narrowing features.

A definition from Ebsco: These Headings follow the structure of the Medical Subject Headings, or MeSH, used in PubMed by the National Library of Medicine. This structure has been used to develop 14,381 CINAHL subject headings which reflect the terminology used by nursing and allied health professionals.

Steps to search:

1. Click "CINAHL Headings" at the top of the page and type your term (e.g., Watson’s Theory of Caring) in the Search box.

2. Type your term in the Search box and click "Browse," as illustrated below:
3. If available, click the icon under the Scope column to see a definition of the subject heading.

4. You can search for multiple words, concepts, or phrases by clicking on the "Browse Additional Terms" link at the bottom of your results page. See the image below that illustrates this:
5. Select the desired subject heading by checking the box next to it. **Double-click on the word “comfort.”** This will display the subheadings associated with the subject heading in a hierarchical view of subject heading terms.

You can also further narrow your search by choosing specific subheadings, if you choose.

Note: the options to make the subject heading a Major Concept in the article, or to Explode results so that all narrower subject headings are searched as well.

In the next view, you see the “Tree View” For: Comfort. This term falls under “Quality of Life” in the Social Sciences. This is the hierarchical view of subject heading terms.
• (Optional) Click on “View Tutorials” to watch the help video on how to use subject headings.

6. Consider if you want to combine the words you have selected with "and" or "or". Searching with "and" will provide more specific results. Searching with "or" will provide you with more results, but will provide results with articles that may contain only one of the CINAHL Headings you selected. In this case, you could conduct a search on “comfort” or “quality of life”.

7. Click “Search Database” to run the search.
Other Search Options (Optional)

- Evidence-Based Care Sheets – The link is located above the search boxes in the purple bar next to the CINAHL Headings link. Search or browse 2-page summaries of treatment care for many conditions and view the references included in producing each of the summaries. Browse or search by topic, and rank results alphabetically or by relevancy.

The following five options are found by going to the purple bar above the search boxes and clicking on the More option.

- **Quick Lessons** – search or browse 2-page summaries with references for diseases and conditions.
- **Cited References** – search through supporting cited references to 1985.
- **Images** – search to view thumbnails of the images available in articles.
- **Citation Matcher** – search for article citations for which you have incorrect or incomplete information.
- **Indexes** – search through the indexed fields, such as author or instrumentation.

Other Tools

When you are looking at your results list and you click on an article title, you’ll be taken to the detailed record, where you’ll find more info about the article. On the right side of the screen are several useful tools.

**Print:** From the open result or from the folder click the Print link. The Print panel is displayed at the top of the article. Choose your options, such as the “Citation Format” drop down list to select APA. Click on the “Print” button. More info about printing is located online at [http://support.ebsco.com/help/](http://support.ebsco.com/help/), (if needed, click on your language preference, and click on EBSCOhost Research Databases), and scroll down to the Print/Email/Save area.

**Email:** From the open result or from the folder, click the E-mail link. The Email panel is displayed at the top of the article. Fill out the form including full email address, and subject to appear in the email subject line. Click on the “Citation Format” drop down list to select APA. Click on the “Send” button. More info about emailing is located online at [http://support.ebsco.com/help/](http://support.ebsco.com/help/), (if needed, click on your language preference, and click on EBSCOhost Research Databases), and scroll down to the Print/Email/Save area.

**Save:** From an open result or from the folder, click the Save link. The Save panel is displayed at the top of the article. Choose your options, such as the “Citation Format” drop down list to select APA. Click on the “Save” button. More info about saving is located online at [http://support.ebsco.com/help/](http://support.ebsco.com/help/), (if needed, click on your language preference, and click on EBSCOhost Research Databases), and scroll down to the Print/Email/Save area.

**Citing in APA Style:** Click on the title of the article to be able to see the Cite link. It will be on the right of the page. After you click on the link, a panel is displayed at the top of the article, showing the various citation formats. Scroll down in this panel to see all of the options available. Digital object identifiers (DOI) are being added at the bottom of
citations from 2008 forward. You can copy and paste the APA formatted citation.

**Permalink:** These are persistent links/dedicated URLs that do not change. Click on the title of the article to be able to see the Permalink link. It will be on the right of the page. After you click on the link, a panel is displayed at the top of the article, showing the link that you can copy. The provided link should include the web address so you can access the full text links from off-campus. They are dedicated URLs that do not change.

**Create Notes Feature**

1. You must *Sign In*. The “Sign In” link is located at the top of any CINAHL page.
2. From the citation page, HTML Full Text, or PDF Full Text on which you would like to leave a note, click on the **Create Note** link.
3. The **Create Note** panel is displayed at the top of the article. The article citation information will appear in the Context area.
4. Type your note in the box. When finished entering your note, click the **Save** button.
5. From the citation page, the Note is saved to the folder and is accessible from the Folder Items area on the right. Click the **Folder Notes View** link to view your notes in the folder, or click the **Folder** link on the purple bar at the top of the page.
6. From inside the folder, your note is available by clicking **Notes** in the menu on the left side.
7. To view your Note, click the Note title in the folder. You can view the page on which the note was taken by clicking the **View Context** link.

More information about Notetaking is located online at: [http://support.ebsco.com/help/](http://support.ebsco.com/help/), (if needed, click on your language preference, and click on EBSCOhost Research Databases), and scroll down to the Print/Email/Save area and click on Notetaking.

**Help Screens**

The Help screens are nice and the link is located in the upper right-hand corner on each page.

**If you have any questions or need help with your research, please contact me:**

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