

"Searching Skills Toolkit: Finding the Evidence"

Caroline De Bruin and Nicola Pearce-Smith, Carl Heneghan (ed), Rafael Perera (ed), and Douglas Badenoch (ed), 2009, 127 pages, Wiley-Blackwell, \$32.95

Review by Norman M. Goldfarb

"Searching Skills Toolkit: Finding the Evidence" is a nifty little handbook for people who need to find the right scientific articles on a specific topic. If you write articles reporting study results, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, investigator's brochures, or prescriptions, this means you. If you are embarking on a course of clinical or other medical research, this means you too.

This book has been selected for
[The First Clinical Research Bookshelf](#)
Essential reading for clinical research professionals

More than 400,000 biomedical articles will be published this year in over 32,000 journals. A Google search on "diabetes articles" yields 17.6 million results, admittedly fewer than "UFO" (49.4 million), but still too many to browse over a normal-sized cup of tea.

The book covers the topic from search strategies to likely sources (depending on your objectives) to specific search techniques (with worked examples) for Pubmed, MEDLINE Dialog, MEDLINE Ovid, CINAHL EBSCO, and the Cochrane Library.

The book consists of 14 chapters:

- Introduction
- Where to start? Summary tables and charts
- Sources of clinical information: an overview
- Using search engines on the World Wide Web
- Formulating clinical questions
- Building a search strategy
- Free text versus thesaurus
- Refining search results
- Searching specific healthcare databases
- Citation pearl searching
- Saving/recording citations for future use
- Critical appraisal
- Further reading by topic or PubMed ID
- Glossary of terms

The book is available in bookstores.

Reviewer

Norman M. Goldfarb is Managing Director of First Clinical Research LLC, a provider of clinical research best practices information, consulting and training services. Contact him at 1.650.465.0119 or ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com.