The CINAHL Databases - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. In CINAHL, what are web site records and web document records?

Both web site records and web document records are found primarily in the CINAHL Plus product.

Web site records provide indexing of Web sites of interest to nursing and allied health professionals. Web site records cover subject coverage, professional audience, original content, links, navigation features, CEU credits, contact information and special features.

Web documents include indexing of content mined from web sites, such as professional guidelines, standards and consumer/patient education teaching materials.

Q. What are the default fields searched in the CINAHL databases?

When performing a search in the CINAHL databases, the default fields for unqualified searches are:

- Title
- Abstract
- Subject headings

See also:

What is an unqualified search?

Q. What is the meta synthesis value in the publication type limiter in CINAHL databases?

This publication type value is applied to articles that indicate the presence of a qualitative methodology that integrates results from a number of different, but inter-related studies. This value has been applied to records, as appropriate, back to 1997.

Q. What is included in Pre-CINAHL, which is a subset of records in the CINAHL databases?

Pre-CINAHL includes records that are not yet 100% indexed. These records are in process and they do not have subject headings applied yet. Once subject headings are applied, these records are no longer a part of the Pre-CINAHL component of the databases.
Q. How do I limit my results to only Pre-CINAHL records?

In the CINAHL databases, you can limit a search to include only Pre-CINAHL records, or exclude all Pre-CINAHL records, by using the YC field tag.

- A search for YC N will search only within Pre-CINAHL content.
- Or you can use the Search Only Pre-CINAHL limiter in the Search Options area on the main search page to limit a search to records only in Pre-CINAHL.

- A search of YC Y will exclude Pre-CINAHL content.
- Or you can use the Exclude Pre-CINAHL limiter in the Search Options area on the main search page to exclude Pre-CINAHL content in a search.

Q. How are masters theses selected for inclusion in CINAHL?

CINAHL proactively works with nursing schools to supply masters theses for indexing. If a school would like to have their theses included in CINAHL, please notify Cinahl Information Systems.

Q. Why do recent issues of a journal that appears in both CINAHL and another database sometimes take longer to appear in CINAHL?

In some cases, users may notice that a journal common to CINAHL and another database (such as Academic Search Premier) may take slightly longer to appear in CINAHL.

This is because CINAHL records are comprehensively indexed by nursing professionals, who apply a nursing specific taxonomy to the record for improved retrieval of content.

The indexing for CINAHL allows for retrieval of content with the option to limit your results with over 20 limiters to improve relevance.

Q. What are “research articles” in CINAHL databases?

In the CINAHL databases, there is a limiter for “research article.” When applied, your search is limited to articles that are about a research study or examination of subject matter that uses investigational or experimental techniques.

A research study includes data collection, subject selection, methodology, discussion of results, and application, if any. For materials about or how to conduct a research study see the specific CINAHL subject headings such as Nursing Research or Research, Medical.
Q. How does the human limiter work to limit my result set in CINAHL products?

The human limiter applies only to records that represent research studies that use human subjects/participants. Research studies are identified with focus on humans, animals, or “other,” such as plant, food, or equipment. Thus by applying the human limiter your result set will only retrieve research studies using human subjects/participants (or, in rare cases, both animals and humans). You will see “Human” as a minor subject heading on records in your result set when this limiter is applied. Note that some research studies use both animals AND humans as subjects/participants, and using the Human limiter would bring those up as well.

The human limiter has been considered against all records in the CINAHL databases, except those that are in Pre-CINAHL.

Q. How do the “written by a nurse” limiters limit my result set in CINAHL products?

There are two limiters of this variety:

• **First Author is Nurse** – If this limiter is applied, then you will only retrieve records where it is confirmed that the first author of an article is a nurse, according to credentials noted in the article.

• **Any Author is Nurse** – If this limiter is applied, then you will only retrieve records where at least one author is a nurse, according to the credentials noted in the article.

The written by a nurse limiter applies to records from November 2009 and forward. Credentials include RN, BSN, MSN, or appropriate degree. As this limiter pertains to non-U.S. journals, the credentials include licensed nurse or appropriate nursing degree in the particular country.