

Intended Users:	Consumers	Healthcare Providers	Information Professionals	Researchers
-----------------	-----------	----------------------	---------------------------	-------------



NLM Digital Collections

Description: Digital Collections provides access to the National Library of Medicine’s distinctive

digital content in the areas of biomedicine, health care, and the history of medicine. The content in Digital Collections is freely available and, unless otherwise indicated, in the public domain. In addition to born-digital resources (which are materials that are created in a digital format), this collection provides access to historical manuscripts, images, film, software, digitized media, and cartographic records, from as far back as the 1400s.

Popular uses of this product:

Consumers	Healthcare Providers	Information Professionals	Researchers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the history of medicine and learn about prominent scientists in medical research. • Find historical images and films about medicine and history that are in the public domain and free to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find reports and briefs about recent issues in medicine. • Find grey literature and government publications regarding healthcare in the U.S. • Find information about out-of-date medical practices that may be currently impacting a patient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search archival records and personal papers collections. • Search the “Index Catalogue” to find journals, monographs, and dissertations. • Help patrons find primary resources on healthcare and history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore historical archives and medical documents. • Review U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notices of judgment and evidence files for federally prosecuted manufacturers. • Download PDFs and full-text transcripts.

Key Points:

1. Digital Collections is dedicated to preserving and offering access to medical and cultural resources of historical significance spanning centuries.
2. Unless otherwise stated, resources are in the public domain and can be reused.

Potential Predicaments:

1. A few of the images are under copyright so people should check for any restrictions.
2. Much of the medical information on this site is of historical value rather than current, standard practice. Consumers should be directed to other resources if they are looking for current medical information.
3. Some handwritten texts lack accurate transcriptions due to optical character recognition software limitations.

Teaching Examples:

1. Browse the “Health Policy and Services Research” collection. Find a **Government Regulation** (use the Subject filter) **Guideline** (use the Genre filter) to explore various healthcare guidance for industry and government on topics from infant formula to tobacco products.
2. Explore the collection “Tropical Disease Motion Pictures” and find a film about 20th century control and prevention methods for diseases such as malaria and yellow fever.

Real Life Examples:

1. A student uses Digital Collections’ “World War 1, 1914-1918” collection to look up personal narratives from WW1 medics as a primary resource for a history project.
2. A researcher is conducting preliminary research on medical education in the 19th century, searching for “medical education” by keyword and limiting the search results by 1800-1899 in the **Publication** filter.

More Information:

[Overview and Help Documentation](#)

[Introductory Video](#)

Commercial Equivalents and Other Resources:

Many universities and community organizations have historical medical archives that include local history. Commercial platforms like Digital Commons and CONTENTdm generally focus more on institutional publishing and repository hosting services, while open-source systems like Invenio, Islandora, and Fedora emphasize customization and community governance.