# How PubMed Works: Medical Subject Headings Handout

1. The National Library of Medicine’s Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) is a special type of vocabulary that represent terms in the biomedical literature. What is the name of this type of vocabulary?
Answer:
2. How are MeSH terms organized within the MeSH database?
Answer:
3. How often are MeSH terms revised?
Answer:
4. What is the name given to the term that is synonymous or close in scope to the preferred MeSH term?
Answer:
5. When searching with a broad MeSH term, all the narrower more specific terms below will automatically be included in your search. What is the name of this feature?
Answer:
6. Will your PubMed search details show all the narrower terms included in your search? Yes or No.
Answer:
7. Which two places must you check to find all terms that will be included in your PubMed search?
Answer:
8. Exercise #1: When you run a search in PubMed using the MeSH term Fear, what other MeSH terms will automatically be included in your search?
Answer:
9. What are the four types of MeSH terms?
Answer:
10. What is the purpose of applying a subheading to a MeSH heading during the indexing process?
Answer:
11. Do Subheadings explode? Yes or No.
Answer:
12. When building your search in MeSH, which Boolean operator will be applied if you choose more than one subheading at a time?
Answer:
13. When viewing the MeSH terms on a PubMed record, the major points of an article are marked by what symbol?
Answer:
14. “Publication Types” in MeSH can describe what three categories of information related to the article or to the research?
Answer:
15. Are Supplementary Concepts part of the MeSH hierarchy? Yes or No.
Answer:
16. Exercise #2: True or False? Searching with the subheading therapy will include results indexed with the subheading surgery?
Answer:
17. Exercise #3: Go to MeSH and look up hand washing. How far back can you search for this concept using this MeSH term?
Answer:

## **Additional Training Resources**

[The New PubMed: Trainer's Toolkit](https://learn.nlm.nih.gov/documentation/training-packets/T0022014P/): Includes slides and materials to repurpose for training end-users.

[MEDLINE/PubMed Resources Guide](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/pmresources.html): detailed information about MEDLINE data and searching PubMed.

[Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) Changes and PubMed Searching On-Demand](https://www.nnlm.gov/training/class-catalog/mesh-changes-and-pubmed-searching-demand)

## **Links of Interest**

[What do the Dates in MeSH Mean?](https://youtu.be/CBU7FYJ5Hnk) (1 min; 48 sec video)

[What’s new in MeSH](https://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/whatsnew.html): Lists of important changes and additions to 2024 MeSH Descriptors.