

Ovid Universal Search™ Frequently Asked Questions

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Q: *What is Ovid Universal Search?*

A: Ovid Universal Search (OUS) is Ovid's multi-platform, integrated search engine. It allows users to search across multiple data sources with a single search query.

Q: *What is a source? What is a connector?*

A: A source is essentially an information resource outside of OvidSP. A connector is a software module that will connect Ovid Universal Search to the content from a source that you subscribe to outside of OvidSP. It is important to note that connectors can be designed to connect specific groupings of content on platforms external to OvidSP, or they may be the entirety of a source. For example, EBSCOHost® is a source; CINAHL® on EBSCOHost is a connector. Alternatively, PubMed® is a single connector on Ovid Universal Search.

Contact your sales representative to find out more about how connectors are configured. A standard Ovid Universal Search subscription will come with 10 connectors, but additional connectors may be purchased as well.

Q: *How do I use Ovid Universal Search?*

A: To use Ovid Universal Search, simply select the "Universal Search" check box under the search input box. Ovid Universal Search will automatically search all content available on enabled connectors, along with the databases currently selected in your OvidSP session.

Q: *When I select Ovid Universal Search, can I limit which connector(s) are searched?*

A: No. Currently when Ovid Universal Search is selected, all connected content is searched. The user cannot limit searching to particular connectors.

Q: *With which OvidSP search modes does Ovid Universal Search work?*

A: Ovid Universal Search works both in Advanced Ovid Search as well as Basic Search. When using Basic Search, Ovid Universal Search will expand the terms (if Include Related Terms is selected) as it does with BasicSearch, but will not apply relevance ranking.

Q: *How is Ovid Universal Search different from federated search?*

A: Ovid Universal Search delineates OvidSP results and the results that are retrieved from external sources. Often, federated search engines will, by default, display a single list of all results and attempt to rank them as a group. In contrast, Ovid Universal Search returns the results independently from OvidSP results, in the order that the source sends them.

More importantly, since Ovid Universal Search is integrated into OvidSP, users will be able to take advantage of some of OvidSP's workflow tools, which we will continue to develop and incorporate into Ovid Universal Search going forward. Most federated search engines are simply interfaces to external platforms which send out queries to external resources with no additional research tools.

Q: *How is the search conducted?*

A: Searches are conducted differently depending on the capabilities of the source platform, as

well as what kind of search you perform in Ovid. Below are some examples of what could be sent to a connector.

• **Advanced Ovid Search, “Keyword” and “Map Term to Subject Heading” Selected**

When using Advanced Ovid Search with “Keyword” and “Map Term to Subject Heading” selected, Ovid Universal Search will send the search query as a subject to sources that can handle controlled vocabulary. PubMed is a good example. If performing a keyword search with mappings selected, sending the search query “Pregnancy Complications”, Ovid Universal Search will return results that have the MeSH heading of pregnancy complications (MH- Pregnancy Complications). This differs from how PubMed itself does searching, as they are sending the query to a larger number of fields. In some regards, this can be perceived as a more specific search than what PubMed itself would do under the same circumstances. Exploded terms are not searched.

• **Advanced Ovid Search, “Keyword” Selected but “Map Term to Subject Heading” Not Selected**

When using Advanced Ovid Search with “Keyword” selected but “Map Term to Subject Heading” not selected, Ovid Universal Search will treat the search query as a simple keyword search, which will be handled by the source platform in whichever regard they would normally handle a keyword search. Results will be returned in the default order as sent by the source platform.

• **Advanced Ovid Search, “Author”, “Title”, or “Journal” Selected**

When searching in Advanced Ovid Search with “Author”, “Title”, or “Journal” selected, Ovid Universal Search will send the search query to all external sources as a fielded search for whichever field is selected. It is important to note that many sources will not have the capability to handle this request, and in those situations, we will be sending the query as a keyword. In this regard, Ovid Universal Search will utilize the capabilities of each source.

• **Basic Search, “Include Related Terms” Selected**

When searching using Basic Search with “Include Related Terms” selected, Ovid Universal Search will be sending the search query, as well as expanded terms from our own lexicon along to the target source. We will be combining like terms with an OR operator, and sending the sets along with an “AND” operator.

For example:

- Search: "Evaluation of prostate cancer treatments"
- Sent: (evaluation or evaluate or investigate or ...) and (prostate cancer or prostate neoplasm or ...) and (treatment or treat or ...)

It is important to note that it is not possible to apply all aspects of OvidSP's Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithm to Ovid Universal Search content.

• **Basic Search, “Include Related Terms” Not Selected**

When using Basic Search with “Include Related Terms” not selected, the entire query will be sent to the external source. It is important to note that we will not be able to apply all aspects of the Natural Language Processing (NLP) algorithm that exists in Basic Search on OvidSP to the external sources' content.

Q: *How are results displayed?*

A: Ovid Universal Search results may be viewed in a tabbed format, allowing for a delineated view of each source and connector, or through a single consolidated view, which allows for deduplication of the combined results. We give users the choice of browsing through the results of each source independently in a tabular fashion, or to view all results in a combined view.

Q: *Can I de-duplicate results across all connectors?*

A: OvidSP results can be deduplicated as usual, and Ovid Universal Search results may also be deduplicated, independent of OvidSP results. In order to ensure all results are available after deduplication, Universal Search utilizes a parent/child methodology when deduplicating, such that the parent citation is displayed, but the option to see child results is available as well.

Q: *Are there links directly to available full text?*

A: Whenever sufficient metadata is returned from a particular source for full text to be identified, Ovid Universal Search will display a link to that full text within the results display.

Q: *Why are my results different between Ovid MEDLINE, PubMed and Ovid Universal Search with a PubMed connector? Why are results different when shown on an Ovid Search connector than when shown on the native site?*

A: There are several reasons why results may differ. Using PubMed as an example, PubMed searches (on either the native interface or as a Universal Search connector) will contain e-Pub ahead of print and nonMEDLINE journals and content that is included in PubMed but is not released to any licensee of the PubMed data.

Additionally, some fields may search differently. For example, if you perform a keyword search in Ovid with "Mapping" selected, and choose a particular MeSH term, we will search PubMed for that term as a Subject Heading (SH). By contrast, PubMed natively searches in not just the Subject Heading field, but also in multiple fields, many times yielding less precise search results.

If searching in Basic Search with "Include Related Terms" selected, Ovid Universal Search will expand upon your query with related terms and send them to the external platform, allowing for a larger breadth of content.

Occasionally, there are discrepancies in data due to scheduled updates that could result in content being available on one platform and not the other.

Q: *Can I limit my PubMed Universal Search connector to search only the e-Pub ahead of print data not included in MEDLINE?*

A: You can choose to have only ePub ahead of print content retrieved through your PubMed Universal Search connector. Contact your sales representative to find out more.