

## **Guide for first round of clinical trial searches – NIH clinical trials project**

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Bristol, UK, 25 October 2022

***For each trial, you perform up to 4 search steps, one after the other, in the order below. You keep searching until you have found a trial's results. As soon as you have found a trial's results, you can stop searching and start the whole process again with the next trial on your list.***

***The search guide below was written for ClinicalTrials.gov, but you can apply the same search strategy to all three trial registries:***

- **ClinicalTrials.gov** <https://clinicaltrials.gov/>
- **EUCTR** <https://www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu/ctr-search/search>
- **DRKS** [https://www.drks.de/drks\\_web/navigate.do?navigationId=search](https://www.drks.de/drks_web/navigate.do?navigationId=search)

***DRKS does not have 'tabular summary results,' so for all DRKS trials, you can skip the first step. EUCTR does not list scientific journal publications under 'results' so you can skip the second step.***

### ***Notes:***

- *We will only count articles in peer-reviewed journals and PhD theses as 'publications'. If during searching you find trial results in any different format (e.g. poster, presentation, preprint) please paste the hyperlink into the column "grey literature" and then continue the search.*
- *Some journal articles have two publication dates: an (earlier) online publication date, and a (later) print publication date. Please always enter the earliest date.*
- *Feel free to note anything of interest in the column "comments" at any time.*

### **Step 1. Scan the "results" section of ClinicalTrials.gov for 'tabular summary results'**

You go to the website <https://clinicaltrials.gov/> and copy and paste the trial number (e.g. NCT05439460) into the field "Other terms" and hit enter, then click on the study.

- If there is a tab that says "Study results" click on that, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet, and move on to the next trial on your list = done, you can move on to the next trial on your list
- If there is a tab that says "No results posted" move on to Step 2.

### **Step 2. Scan the "results" section of ClinicalTrials.gov for publications**

Click on the tab "No results posted". You may or may not see one or several hyperlinked publications, like this:

Publications automatically indexed to this study by ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier (NCT Number):

[Bangs ME, Wietcha LA, Wang S, Buchanan AS, Kelsey DK. Meta-analysis of suicide-related behavior or ideation in child, adolescent, and adult patients treated with atomoxetine. J Child Adolesc Psychopharmacol. 2014 Oct;24\(8\):426-34. doi: 10.1089/cap.2014.0005. Epub 2014 Jul 14.](#)

[Newcorn JH, Sutton VK, Zhang S, Wilens T, Kratochvil C, Emslie GJ, D'souza DN, Schuh LM, Allen AJ. Characteristics of placebo responders in pediatric clinical trials of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry. 2009 Dec;48\(12\):1165-72. doi: 10.1097/CHI.0b013e3181bc730d.](#)

[Block SL, Kelsey D, Coury D, Lewis D, Quintana H, Sutton V, Schuh K, Allen AJ, Sumner C. Once-daily atomoxetine for treating pediatric attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder: comparison of morning and evening dosing. Clin Pediatr \(Phila\). 2009 Sep;48\(7\):723-33. doi: 10.1177/0009922809335321. Epub 2009 May 6.](#)

- If you see no hyperlinked publications, move on to Step 3.
- If you do see hyperlinked publications:  
*You will need to check whether any of these publications actually contains trial results. Ignore anything that was published before the trial's primary completion date. For all other publications, click on the hyperlink and take a look at the publication. If the title of the publication contains "protocol" it's the trial's design, not its results = ignore. Also, there might be several publications that briefly reference the trial, but do not contain its results.*
  - If you think you have definitely found the publication with the trial's results, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet and enter the publication date = done.
  - If you think you have probably found the trial's results but are not 100% sure, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet, enter the publication date, and enter "1" into the column in the spreadsheet called "unsure" = done.
  - If you have found more than one possible publication, copy all publication hyperlinks into the column in the spreadsheet called "comments" = done.

If you have (probably) found a relevant publication = done, you can move on to the next trial on your list. If you have not found any relevant publication, move to Step 3.

### Step 3: Paste the trial number (e.g. NCT05439460) into Google Scholar

Scan the first 2 pages for potential trial results. As before:

- If you think you have definitely found the publication with the trial's results, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet and enter the publication date = done.
- If you think you have probably found the trial's results but are not 100% sure, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet, enter the publication date, and enter "1" into the column in the spreadsheet called "unsure" = done.
- If you have found more than one possible publication, copy all publication hyperlinks into the column in the spreadsheet called "comments" = done.

If you have (probably) found a relevant publication = done, you can move on to the next trial on your list. If you have not found any relevant publication, move to Step 4.

### Step 4: Search Google Scholar for trial title and investigator name

Paste the trial's title (such as *Transcutaneous Electrical Acupoint Stimulation for the Treatment of ADHD*; the title is right on top of the ClinicalTrials.gov entry) into Google Scholar. Then paste the Principal Investigator's name (near the bottom of the ClinicalTrials.gov entry) behind that, and put the name into "quotation marks".

So your search string will look like this:

*Transcutaneous Electrical Acupoint Stimulation for the Treatment of ADHD "Yan Li"*

Then hit ENTER. Scan the first 2 pages for potential trial results. As before:

- If you think you have definitely found the publication with the trial's results, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet and enter the publication date = done.
- If you think you have probably found the trial's results, but are not 100% sure, copy the hyperlink into the spreadsheet, enter the publication date, and enter "1" into the column in the spreadsheet called "unsure" = done.

- If you have found more than one possible publication, copy all publication hyperlinks into the column in the spreadsheet called “comments” = done.

**If you have not found any relevant publication, mark enter “1” into the column in the spreadsheet called “unreported”.**

**Done! Thank you. You can now move on to the next trial on your list.**

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