

Need to Know

Utilizing Information in Practice

Is this the TRUTH?

The January 4, 2008 issue of *First* reported that Danish researchers have determined that women who drink up to 18 ounces of coffee daily during the second half of pregnancy were no more likely to experience pregnancy complications than women who avoided coffee.

Is this the Truth?

Let's look at the actual research study. The article was *Effect of reducing caffeine intake on birth weight and length of gestation: randomized controlled trial* published in [British Medical Journal Online](#), Volume 334(7590), 24 February 2007, pp 409-414. The authors are Bech, Obel and Henriksen.

In the study, 1207 pregnant women who drank at least three cups of coffee per day were recruited before 20 weeks gestation. 568 women drank caffeinated coffee, and 629 drank decaffeinated coffee. Women were not prevented from drinking other caffeinated beverages, and the amount was noted through interviews. There were no significant differences (remember this means statistically significant) between the two groups with regard to birth weight and length of gestation of their babies.

The researchers note in the discussion section of the report that "if caffeine has an effect on birth weight by mechanisms that operate only in early pregnancy, we would not detect it." Also, other factors to consider which might affect fetal size and gestation are lifestyle, such as smoking, and prepregnancy body mass. Finally, the researchers note that women who smoke metabolize caffeine differently than those who don't, so caution must be exercised when counseling women who smoke.

TEACH IT

In January we discussed **reinforcement** in the teaching/learning process. This month we are going to discuss **retention of information**.

You might deliver excellent continuing education to your staff, but if they don't retain the information, your efforts are wasted. Some ways to promote retention are as follows:

- Provide repeated practice, particularly if the new information is in the form of a skill
- Practice early and often after the training
- Continue to practice on a periodic basis to maintain retention
- Talk with the staff about the new material/skill
- Watch for negative peer pressure. If necessary, involve all the staff in the retention sessions.

And remember—if the staff did not learn the material adequately at the original training, they did not retain much information, so practice will be difficult. You may have to reevaluate your original presentation and redo the program (or at least selected parts of it).



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Healthcare Professionals
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Historical Spotlight



Jonas Salk, 1914-1995

Jonas Salk is best known for his work in developing a vaccine for poliomyelitis, a paralyzing illness that attacks the nervous system. Many epidemics were occurring in the spring and summer months in the United States. The disease, spread by the oral/fecal route, caused swimming pools to remain closed and parents anxious to keep their children isolated from others.

While at the University of Pittsburgh, Salk developed the technique for killing the virus, but still allowing it to trigger an immune response. The March of Dimes heard of his work and helped with additional funding.

After testing on monkeys, the vaccine was tested on the Polio Pioneers, a group of 2 million children. When successful results were announced, mass immunization began. The number of cases dropped from 57000 in 1952 to about 5000 cases in 1957.

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Searching Tips

Searching the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

In the previous issue, we looked at narrowing our searches in PubMed to systematic reviews, and other research studies. Another source to use when searching for systematic reviews is the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, which is considered by many to be the gold standard.

The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) can be searched for free online at <http://cochrane.org/>. Note that while the abstracts are free you'll have to pay for the full reviews. Some of you might have the CDSRs through your employer. If you have Ovid EBMRs, you probably do. It's always worth asking your hospital librarian what you have available to you. Even if you don't have Ovid, you might find that your librarian can get you the Cochrane reviews much more cheaply. We will look at searching tips when searching CDSR using Ovid. Next week we'll look at searching CDSR using cochrane.org.

First, keep in mind that this is a full text database. This means that the entire review is searchable. All of the words, whether in the title, abstract or article text are searched. If you search on "diabetes", all the reviews that have that word anywhere in the text will be returned.

Therefore, you might get a review that states that "all studies with diabetes as a co-morbidity were excluded from this review." Your term "diabetes" is in the text; however, the text is saying that patients with diabetes are not being considered in this particular study. In fact it's being excluded.

What to do? Since most authors will mention their topic in the title, you can specify that your term is searched only in the title. To do this,

1. make sure that the Advanced Ovid Search tab is selected
2. select "title" located above the search box
3. type in your term or phrase
4. click Search. The results will appear below.

Another way to narrow your search is to combine terms. The process of combining terms was covered in the first newsletter. Here's a brief review. If you are searching for synonyms such as "cancer" or "neoplasms", use OR between the words to tell the computer to find either word. To combine different topics such as "asthma" and "vaccines", use AND to tell the computer find only reviews with both words.

e.g. cancer OR neoplasms
asthma AND vaccines

If you would like to save time and typing, make use of the truncation or wildcard feature under the Advanced Ovid Search tab. This is the use of the asterisk at the end of a word to get addition endings. Say you're looking for any terms on neoplasms or neoplastic. Instead of typing all the relevant terms, simply type: neoplas*. This will find the following: neoplastic, neoplasm, neoplasms, neoplasia. Just as vaccin* will find: vaccine, vaccines, vaccinated, vaccination, vaccinations.

e.g. cancer* OR neoplas*
asthma AND vaccin*

Once you have done your search and looked at the display box, you can find the full review by selecting either EBM Topic Review or Ovid Database PDFs. Cochrane Systematic Reviews can be quite long so check the number of pages before printing.

Website

Drug Information Portal

The National Library of Medicine has released the NLM Drug Information Portal <http://druginfo.nlm.nih.gov> . This resource provides the public, healthcare professionals, and researchers with a gateway to current and accurate drug information from the National Library of Medicine and to other key government agencies.

The Drug Information Portal offers a varied selection of resources and focused topics in medicine and drug-related information, with links to individual resources with drug information and summaries tailored to various audiences. General drug categories from MeSH are also included in the Drug Portal records.

More than 15,000 drugs are available for searching. The search interface requires only a drug name; a spellchecker is provided. Information buttons and balloon pop-ups guide the user by providing helpful hints or a description of the resource and links to the source website.

Search results include links to related drug information in MedlinePlus(r), AIDSInfo(r), Medline/PubMed(r), LactMed, HSDB(r), Dietary Supplements Labels Database, TOXLINE(r), DailyMed(r), ClinicalTrials.gov, PubChem, NIAID Anti-HIV/OI Database, ChemIDplus(r), [Drugs@FDA](#), DEA, and USA.gov.

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A Case Study

Using Evidence in Practice

As a public health or school nurse, you have decided that you need to update your protocol for managing head lice. It has not been reviewed for 5 years, and you know new information is most likely available.

How do you begin?

What resources would you examine?

How would you determine if that resource is reliable?

This is how I would proceed.

1. If I was an employee of the state, I would start with the State Library. <http://www.mo.gov>

On the left side of the page is a link called *Employees*

You will then see a section called *References*

The State Library Card, State Library Reference Services, and the Online Resources are excellent.

Under Online Resources you will find *Academic Search Elite* and *Health Source: Nursing Academic Edition*. You can do a search for information by subject in these data bases and obtain articles.

Articles can be requested from the state library at no charge.

2. You can also go to www.cdc.gov

Click on *Diseases and conditions*

H—headlice

Go to *professional links*

PDX-Lab

More information

Always check the reference list of any article or information sheet you find that is helpful to you. This will lead you to more good information.

Alert Notice!

If you are interested in a new or refresher course on finding and using websites and/or using professional databases, e.g. PubMed, be sure to contact us to set these up. We only have one year left on this grant to provide workshops to you. Contact Michelle Custer at custerm@missouri.edu if you are interested in setting something up in the next 12 months.

Announcement!

If you have not completed the NLM surveys, please give us your feedback. Visit our website at <https://www.phn.missouri.edu/survey.aspx> and click on the workshop you attended: Consumer Websites workshop or Professional Databases workshop. If you attended both workshops, please complete both surveys.

Please evaluate our Need to Know newsletter by visiting our website at <https://www.phn.missouri.edu/newsletter.aspx> and clicking on Evaluate Newsletter.

This information is very valuable to us. It helps us report back to our funders and helps us lay the groundwork for additional grants.