



Searching CINAHL with Subject Headings

To increase the likelihood of retrieving relevant results, it is recommended that you search CINAHL using its controlled vocabulary or subject headings called **CINAHL Headings**. These subject headings are assigned to each record to describe the content of the article. CINAHL Headings are arranged in a hierarchy, to allow you to search using the most general to more narrow terms. By searching with CINAHL Headings, you are taking the guess work out of term selection.

Note: NU386 students must first apply filters to their search before following the steps below.

Step 1: Defining Concepts

Example: JD is a 55 year old male who is recovering from a spinal injury. He is currently immobilized and will be for several months. You have been asked to locate information on positioning an immobilized patient to prevent pressure ulcers.

What terms or phrases should you use to search?

1. positioning
2. prevention of pressure ulcers

Note: When choosing concepts, try to eliminate those which could be considered implied through the use of another concept. For instance, *immobilized* could be implied within the pressure ulcer concept because pressure ulcers often occur due to immobilization. Also, adding *spinal injury* to our search would eliminate possibly helpful articles that cover other immobile conditions.

Step 2: Finding CINAHL Headings

To search and browse CINAHL's controlled vocabulary, click on the CINAHL Headings link in the green menu bar at the top of the page.

[CINAHL Headings](#)

Enter the first concept, *positioning*, in the "Browse for" box and click the Browse button.

[CINAHL Headings](#) Folder is empty.

Browse for:

Term Begins With
 Term Contains
 Relevancy Ranked

CINAHL headings that match the word or word phrase that you entered will be listed. Click directly on an acceptable heading to view its details and options.

CINAHL Headings

Page: **Browse for:** positioning

Previous | [Next](#) | Term Begins With Term Contains Relevancy Ranked

Select heading, then add to search using: or [v] Add

(Click term to display details.)

- [Patient Positioning \[Scope \]](#)
- [Birthing Positions \[Scope \]](#)
- [Body Positioning: Self-Initiated \(Iowa NOC\) \[Scope \]](#)
- [Breast Feeding Positions \[Scope \]](#)
- [Perioperative Positioning Injury \(Saba CCC\) \[Scope \]](#)
- [Positioning Therapy \(Saba CCC\) \[Scope \]](#)

Step 3: CINAHL Heading Options

The primary sections in this detailed view include the *Tree View*, *On Search* options, and *Qualifying Subheadings*.

CINAHL Headings Folder is empty.

« Previous **Browse for:** positioning **Browse** [Next](#)

[« Back to List](#) Term Begins With Term Contains Relevancy Ranked

Patient Positioning Select heading, then add to search using: or [v] Add

Tree Views

- [Miscellaneous Techniques \(Non-Cinahl\) +](#)
- [Accelerometry](#)
- [Ankle Brachial Index](#)
- [Artifacts](#)
- [Autopsy](#)
- [Bandaging Techniques +](#)
- [Redmaking](#)
- [Biological Assay +](#)
- [Biometrics](#)
- [Blood Conservation +](#)
- [Blood Irradiation](#)
- [Blood Loss Estimation](#)
- [Body Weights and Measures +](#)
- [Bowel Preparation](#)
- [Brain Mapping](#)
- [Calibration](#)
- [Neuromuscular Blockade](#)
- [Noninvasive Procedures](#)
- [Orthoses Fitting](#)
- Patient Positioning +**
- [Birthing Positions](#)
- [Breast Feeding Positions](#)
- [Prone Position](#)
- [Supine Position](#)
- [Patient Selection](#)
- [Perceptual Masking](#)

On Search:

- Explode
- Major Concept

Qualify Subheadings: [Clear Selections](#)

- Adverse Effects [scope]
- Classification [scope]
- Contraindications [scope]
- Economics [scope]
- Education [scope]
- Equipment And Supplies [scope]
- Ethical Issues [scope]
- Evaluation [scope]
- History [scope]
- Legislation And Jurisprudence [scope]
- Methods [scope]
- Nursing [scope]
- Organizations [scope]
- Psychosocial Factors [scope]
- Standards [scope]
- Trends [scope]
- Utilization [scope]

Tree Views

This view shows where the CINAHL Heading is located in the hierarchy, which moves from broad to narrow concepts. In this example, notice that *Patient Positioning* is in bold and has a plus (+) symbol next to it. This symbol indicates that the CINAHL Heading has even narrower concepts beneath it. Sometimes, you can find better Headings by scanning through the Tree.

On Search:

- **Explode** - this option allows you to include, in your search, any narrower Headings that fall below the primary CINAHL Heading. Exploding a Heading will broaden your search. By checking the box next to *Explode*, CINAHL will search for all the records indexed for *Patient Positioning*, as well as the Headings indented beneath it. When a heading is exploded, all of the terms will be searched together using 'OR'. **If you can explode, do so. If you get too many results, you can always change it later.**
- **Major Concept** - several Headings are assigned to each article. Some are designated as Major if the main thrust of the article has to do with that Heading. By checking the box next to **Major Concept**, you will limit your results to only the records where *Patient Positioning* is the major focus of the article. This option can severely limit your results. **It is recommended that this option not be used unless you have already searched and received a large number of results.**

Subheadings

Subheadings are sometimes added to a CINAHL Heading to qualify or focus the intended use of the Heading. You may select one or more subheadings to further refine your search results. Adding these subheadings will reduce the number of records you retrieve. **Avoid excessive use of subheadings, as some articles may contain information on multiple areas covered in the subheadings. These articles are considered general; hence subheadings would not be used.**

On Search: Returning to our example, we want to *Explode* the CINAHL Heading *Patient Positioning*, but not apply the Major Concept or Subheading options at this point.

Explode
 Major Concept

Step 4: Selecting the Heading and Adding More Concepts to the Search

Once options have been reviewed and chosen by clicking the box next to the selection, the heading selection will remain in memory while you choose the next heading to add to the search.

The screenshot displays the EBSCO CINAHL database search interface. At the top, it shows the database name "Database: CINAHL with Full Text" and a search button. Below this, there are options to "Combine selections with:" (set to "or") and a "Search Database" button. The main search area is titled "CINAHL Headings" and contains a search box with the text "pressure ulcers" and a "Browse" button. Below the search box, there are radio buttons for "Term Begins With", "Term Contains", and "Relevancy Ranked", with "Relevancy Ranked" selected. A list of search results is shown, with "Patient Positioning" checked. To the left, there is a "Tree Views" section with a list of subheadings: "Miscellaneous Techniques (Non-Cinahl) +", "Accelerometry", "Ankle Brachial Index", "Artifacts", and "Autopsy". To the right, there is an "On Search:" section with checkboxes for "Explode" (checked) and "Major Concept". At the bottom right, there is a "Qualify Subheadings:" section with a "Clear Select" button.

Step 5: Running The Search

Once all concepts are chosen, use the "Combine selections with:" box to choose how you want your search

[Search Database](#)

considered and then click



Database: **CINAHL with Full Text** [?](#)

Combine selections with:

or [v](#)

[Search Database](#)

CINAHL Headings

[◀ Previous Term](#) [Next Term ▶](#)

[◀ Back to List](#)

pressure ulcers

Term Begins With Term Contains Relevancy Ranked

Patient Positioning

Tree Views

[Miscellaneous Techniques \(Non-Cinahl\) +](#)

[Accelerometry](#)

[Ankle Brachial Index](#)

[Artifacts](#)

[Autopsy](#)

On Search:

Explode [?](#)

Major Conc

Qualify Subhe

Note how the search box is now populated with all the terms you select and the search has been run, producing a list of results:



Searching: **CINAHL with Full Text** [Choose Databases >](#)

(MH "Patient Positioning+") and (MH "Pressure Ulcer")

[Search](#)

[Clear](#)



in [Select a Field \(optional\)](#) [v](#)

and [v](#) in [Select a Field \(optional\)](#) [v](#)

and [v](#) in [Select a Field \(optional\)](#) [v](#) [Add Row](#)

[Advanced Search](#) [Visual Search](#) [Search History/Alerts](#) [Preferences >](#)

Narrow Results by

Source Types

[All Results](#)

[Periodicals](#)

[Books/Monographs](#)

[Pamphlets](#)

[Dissertations](#)

[CEUs](#)

Subject

[Pressure Ulcer](#)

[Patient Positioning](#)

All Results: 1-30 of 301 Page: 1 [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [Next](#)

Sort by: [Date](#) [Add ?](#)

Results for: (MH "Patient Positioning+") and (MH "Pressure Ulce... [Alert / Save / Share](#)

1. [Use of prone positioning in a patient with acute respiratory distress syndrome: a case review.](#)
(includes abstract); Laux L; McGonigal M; Thieret T; Weatherby L Critical Care Nursing Quarterly, 2008 Apr-Jun; 31 (2): 178-83 (journal article - case study) ISSN: 0887-9303 PMID: 18360148 CINAHL AN: 2009880705
Abstract: The care of a patient with acute respiratory distress syndrome is complex. The nurse must not only concentrate on the physical demands of the patient but also on the emotional demands of the patient and family. Understanding the disease process can aid the nurse in understanding the treatment options including the use of prone positioning for this patient population.

Cited References [@](#) [Add to folder](#)

[Check Here For Full Text](#)

2. [Practice points. Managing tissue loads.](#)

Step 6: Refining Results with Limits (Optional)

Refining Results with Limits (Optional)

The Limit feature allows you to refine your results in a variety of ways. The Limits are available in the "Advanced Search" menu and can be applied either before or after a search. Always be cautious when applying limits, as you may inadvertently block out relevant results. **Note:** When beginning a new search, you must undo all limits. A variety of limit options are available. The most used limits are :

- Published Date
- Language
- Peer Reviewed
- Research Article
- Journal Subset (can limit to Nursing publications only)

Search Options	
Search modes ?	<input type="radio"/> Boolean/Phrase <input checked="" type="radio"/> Find all my search terms <input type="radio"/> Find any of my search terms
	Apply related words <input type="checkbox"/> Also search within the full text of the articles <input type="checkbox"/>
Limit your results	
Publication Year from <input type="text"/> to <input type="text"/>	Peer Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/>
Language All Afrikaans Chinese Dutch	Research Article <input type="checkbox"/>
Age Groups All Fetus, Conception to Birth Infant, Newborn 0-1 month Infant, 1-23 months	Clinical Queries All Therapy - High Sensitivity Therapy - High Specificity Therapy - Best Balance
Publication Type All Abstract Accreditation Algorithm	Gender All Female Male
Articles With Images All PDF Text with Graphics	Exclude MEDLINE records <input type="checkbox"/>
	Journal Subset All Africa Allied Health Alternative/Complementary Therapies
	Special Interest All Advanced Nursing Practice Case Management Chiropractic Care