

Setting up Search Alerts in PubMed

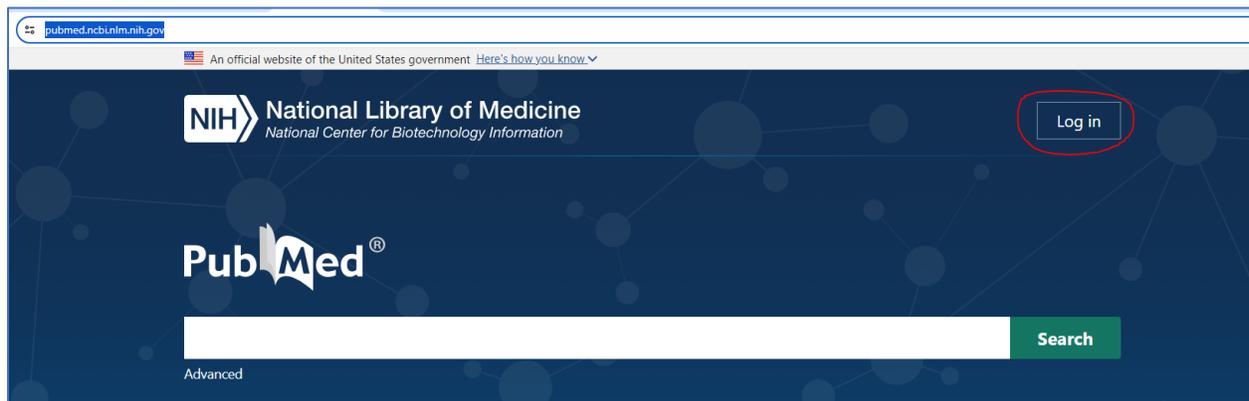


Prepared by the [Animal Welfare Information Center](#) (AWIC), National Agricultural Library, U.S. Department of Agriculture, February 2024

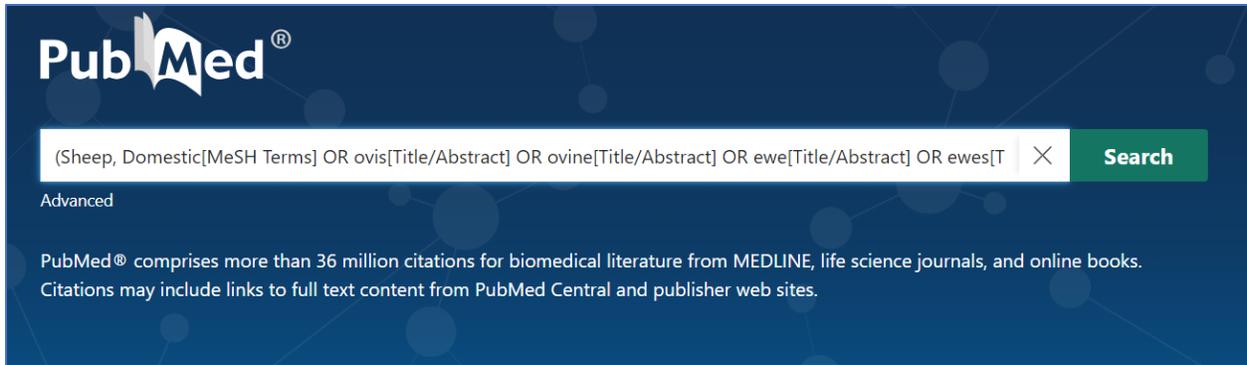
PubMed (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>) is a free database of biomedical literature that is maintained by the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) National Center for Biotechnology Information. Like many databases, PubMed lets users set up search alerts based upon a saved database search. This means once the alert is active, you will receive emails notifying you whenever a new article matching your search criteria is added to PubMed. If you have a literature search that periodically requires updating, setting up a search alert will keep you informed about new citations without having to rerun the search.

Here are some simple steps for setting up a search alert. You may also view NLM's YouTube video, [PubMed: Save Searches and Email Alerts](#).

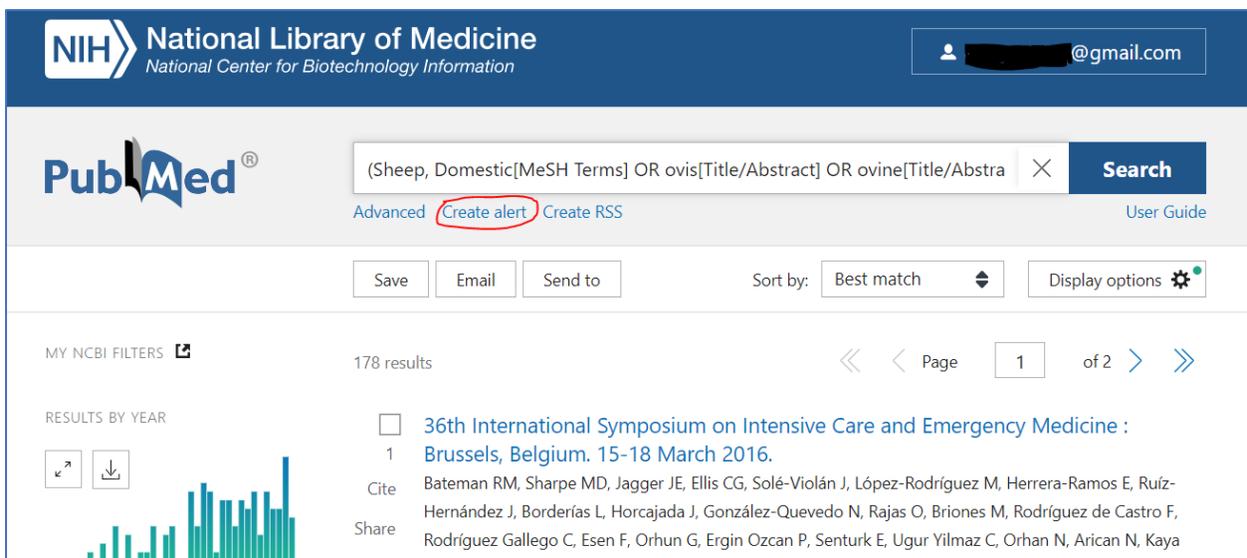
1. Open [PubMed](#) in your web browser. Login to your MyNCBI Account in the upper right-hand corner. If you do not have an account, you can set one up. NCBI provides multiple login options, including Google, Microsoft, and Login.gov.



2. Enter search terms or copy and paste a search strategy into the search box and select Search.



- PubMed will display search results in a list. Select "Create alert" under the search bar at the top of the screen.



- On the next screen, you will set parameters for the search alert. Create a short name for your alert in "Name of saved search." (In the example we named it "Pain assessment in sheep").
- Your alerts will be sent to the default email address for your login, but you can also change this to another email address.
- To activate the alert, make sure to select the "Yes" button.
- Fill out the four fields below the email address specifying the frequency of alerts, day of the week for delivery, format, and maximum number of results. You may also check a box indicating that you still wish to receive alerts even when there are no results.
- Select "Save" to save the alert.
- You may edit your alert at any time by signing into MyNCBI, selecting your email address, and finding the alert in the Saved Searches on your Dashboard.

Your saved search

* Name of saved search:

* Search terms:

[Test search terms](#)

Would you like email updates of new search results?

Yes

No

Email: [\(change\)](#)

Frequency: Monthly

Which day? The first Sunday

Report format: Summary

Send at most: 5 items

Send even when there aren't any new results

Optional text in email:

Tips for Keeping Track of New Citations from Alerts

1. You can use search alerts to help update literature searches and bibliographies.
2. Whenever you receive an alert from NCBI, save it in a designated subfolder in your email account.
3. You can use the links in the alert emails to access the citation in PubMed. PubMed offers many options for saving and exporting citations. Watch the videos [Save Search Results in Collections, Including Favorites](#). There are also videos on YouTube on exporting citations from PubMed to citation management software such as [Zotero](#), [RefWorks](#), and [EndNote](#).

If you need assistance with alerts or citation management, reach out to a librarian at your institution.