TIPS ON SEARCHING BIOETHICSLINE WITH GRATENFUL MED 6.0

BIOETHICSLINE (short name: BIOETHICS) has been incorporated into the "user-friendly" Grateful Med software beginning with Version 6.0, available Summer 1992. This database contains citations to English-language journal articles, books, court decisions, newspaper articles, and other materials that discuss ethical and public policy issues in health care and biomedical research. It is produced for the National Library of Medicine by the Bioethics Information Retrieval Project at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University.

The Grateful Med Input Screen for BIOETHICS includes the following lines:

AUTHOR NAME
TITLE WORDS
SUBJECT WORDS
2ND SUBJECT
3RD SUBJECT
4TH SUBJECT

Author Searching

As with MEDLINE, authors may be entered in natural order, with or without middle initials. Do not include honorific or qualifying terms such as Dr. or Jr.

Example: ROBERT VEATCH  [upper or lower case does not matter]

Title Word Searching

As with MEDLINE, specific titles may be retrieved by typing one or more words on the Title Words line. Enter the least common words you can think of from the title(s) wanted. If more than one word is entered, Grateful Med will supply the word "and" between them. Plurals are automatically truncated to pick up the singular or plural form of the word. Use a colon (:) to truncate if more than one letter may be involved.

Examples: DUMPING
MATERNAL FETAL  [will become MATERNAL AND FETAL]
WITHHOLD: [will retrieve WITHHOLD, WITHHOLDING, WITHHOLDS]

Note: Title Word searching can be a useful first step in finding controlled vocabulary indexing terms (MeSH) to improve retrieval. When you scan citations retrieved via Title Words and mark those that are relevant, Grateful Med will analyze your search results and list indexing terms that are common to the relevant citations.

Subject Searching

As with MEDLINE, subject words that are synonyms or that represent a similar concept should be typed on a single Subject line; the word "OR" will be inserted between the words automatically. Subject words that represent different concepts should be typed on separate Subject lines; the word "AND" will be inserted between the lines automatically.
Usually a better use of the Subject lines is to type a word and press the F10 key (or press the F10 key and then type a word). A list of MeSH Headings from the controlled Medical Subject Headings vocabulary will then appear, with instructions at the bottom of the screen.

It is generally advisable to add an asterisk in front of the relevant MeSH Heading(s) of primary interest. This is because BIOETHICS citations tend to be indexed with more subject terms than MEDLINE citations, and retrieval is likely to be too great if the primary topic is not asterisked.

Examples:  
*EUTHANASIA
*EUTHANASIA, PASSIVE

Either or both of the above terms could be chosen from a list of MeSH Headings by typing the word EUTHANASIA and pressing the F10 key, and then asterisking and selecting the wanted term(s) from the list displayed.

Subjects of secondary interest that are "ANDed" with a primary subject need not be asterisked.

**Bioethics Keywords**

The BIOETHICS database is actually indexed with Keywords, most of which come from a special controlled vocabulary called the *Bioethics Thesaurus*. In the database's initial debut in Version 6.0 of Grateful Med, however, these Keywords do not print. They *may not be searched except as un-asterisked Subject words* (or by searching the database directly rather than in "user-friendly" mode).

**Keywords and MeSH Mapping**

Approximately 80% of BIOETHICS Keywords are automatically "mapped" to equivalent or nearly equivalent MeSH Headings. This makes it possible to search them as MeSH Headings using the F10 key. Those Keywords that have not been mapped to MeSH Headings, such as ETHICISTS, can only be searched as Title Words or as unasterisked Subject Words.

Sometimes broader and narrower Keywords are mapped to the same MeSH Heading. For example, the Keywords INFORMED CONSENT, PARENTAL CONSENT, and THIRD PARTY CONSENT are all mapped to the single MeSH Heading INFORMED CONSENT.

If all of the above Keywords are of interest, use just one Subject Words line to select (and asterisk) the MeSH Heading INFORMED CONSENT.

If only PARENTAL CONSENT is of interest, use one Subject line to select (and asterisk) the MeSH Heading INFORMED CONSENT. Then type the word PARENTAL on another Subjects line, which will be automatically "ANDed" with the first Subjects line, as follows:

```
SUBJECT WORDS:  *INFORMED CONSENT
and
2ND SUBJECT:  PARENTAL
```
Special BIOETHICS Subject Search Limiters

Three special terms (biorev, biorevplus, and biostand) have been created for the BIOETHICS database to make it possible to limit retrieval to reviews or other special types of material, as follows:

BIOREV: limits your search to references indexed as literature reviews or comprehensive overviews of a particular bioethical issue.

BIOREVPLUS: limits your search to reviews and analytical discussions; it gives more retrieval than BIOREV.

BIOSTAND: limits your search to references that discuss standards, guidelines, criteria, organizational policies, codes of ethics, etc.

To use one of the above special limiting terms, type it (unasterisked) on a separate Subjects line, so that it will automatically be "ANDed" with terms on other Subjects lines. (At least the primary topic should be an asterisked MeSH Heading.)

For example:

SUBJECT WORDS:  *HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION

and

2ND SUBJECT:  *ADOLESCENCE or *CHILD

and

3RD SUBJECT:  BIOREVPLUS

For Further Information

If you have questions about the use of Grateful Med for searching BIOETHICS, contact the MEDLARS Management Section, National Library of Medicine, 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20894, 301/496-6193 or 800/638-8480. If you have questions about the content or subject indexing policies of BIOETHICSLINE, or about the availability of materials cited, contact the Bioethics Information Retrieval Project, Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057, 202/687-3885 or 800/MED-ETHX.