



Better Than Google? Update on Databases for Alaskans



Almost **\$500,000** is spent each year on Alaska's Virtual Library, also known as the Databases for Alaskans Project (**DFA**). Available to everyone living in Alaska, this free web-based collection of resources gives access to magazine and newspaper articles, book reviews, radio and TV transcripts, reference books, auto repair manuals, test preparation materials, and even genealogical

resources. Share this amazing information bonanza with friends and family living in Alaska, and with your neighbors too!

Getting to These Tools

Use the [Databases for Alaskans](http://www.lib.uaa.alaska.edu/hsis/) link on the HSIS homepage at <http://www.lib.uaa.alaska.edu/hsis/> or a similar link on most Alaska libraries' websites. Since the project has tried to authenticate all computers with an *Alaska-based IP*, most users should not need a userID and password. However, if you receive Internet service through a nationwide provider like AOL, you must call 1-800-440-2919 for the **NEW** access codes. If you have connection questions, please contact dan_cornwall@eed.state.ak.us.

Answers and Articles from Health Resources in the DFA

■ *Health Source - Consumer Edition*. Full-text articles written for the layman from 150 journals in medicine, psychology, nutrition, child care, sports medicine, healthcare law and general health. Updated daily.

■ *Health Source - Nursing/Academic* provides full-text articles from 550 scholarly journals focusing on many medical disciplines, with abstracts and indexing for 300 more. Updated daily.

■ *Alt HealthWatch* has full text for 180 publications in complementary and alternative medicine dating back to 1990.


■ *Academic Search Premier*, a huge multidisciplinary database, has considerable medical content also, and goes back to 1975.

■ *Clinical Pharmacology* offers full-text drug monographs and patient handouts in English and Spanish for all U.S. prescription drugs, herbals and dietary supplements. It is a handy place to check for generic/brand names, interactions, mechanism of action, and side effects.

■ *MEDLINE* contains citations and abstracts from more than 4,800 biomedical journals published in the U.S. and 70 other countries from 1949 onwards. The database covers the fields of medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine, the health care system, and the preclinical sciences. Full text for MEDLINE citations is drawn from other DFA databases, so is plentiful. Updated monthly.

■ *Oxford Premium Reference Collection* offers over 100 reference titles in all disciplines from the Oxford Companion series. Under **Medicine**, you'll find *The Oxford Companion to the Body*, *The Concise Medical Dictionary*, *The A-Z of Medicinal Drugs*, *The Oxford Companion to Medicine*, *A Dictionary of Nursing*, *A Dictionary of Psychology*, and *The Oxford Dictionary of Sports Science and Medicine*. Note: The Oxford collection has its own ID and password. Please call 1-800-440-2919 for all DFA access codes.

Tips for Searching these Databases

Click on  beside the database box for search help and examples.

Use the truncation symbol * to retrieve all endings on a search term. e.g. teen* retrieves teen, teens, teenager, teenagers, teenaged. Use double quotes around phrases.

Learn to use the **Boolean** operators (AND, OR, NOT) to narrow or broaden your search.

Try the **Advanced search** with three search boxes and drop-down menus for Boolean choices rather than the one box choice you may find when clicking on the database name.

Subject or MeSH searches are trickier. Click the appropriate green tab, select terms one at a time from the listing, and use the ADD button to copy each one to your search box with the correct operator. (Exploding a subject selects that term as well as all of its narrower terms to search.) Lastly click the search button.

You can also click on subject links within a relevant citation to launch a new search using that subject.

Set aside items of interest in your personal folder (for this session only). When done, click [Folder has items](#) to view. Then e-mail, print, or save to a USB drive, floppy, or local hard drive for later use.

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