How to perform a Literature Search – Using PubMed

For this recipe you will need:

❖ *Access to a computer with internet capabilities*
❖ *A subject that you wish to know more about or a scholarly question*
❖ *An email address*
❖ *The location of the nearest medical librarian to whom you may have access*

Step 1: Identify the key concepts for your search.
        Example: What role does pain have in sleep disorders?
        The key concepts are:
            1. Pain
            2. Sleep Disorders

Step 2: Go to: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/

Step 3: Enter the terms (or key concepts) in the search box.

Step 4: Look at the suggestions that display as you type your search terms. Is it what you are looking for? You may be able to click one to give you a better search.

Step 5: Click "Search".

Step 6: Select "Filters" on the left hand side of page

        Examples: 5 years, Human, English (There are many filters available. These can be used as tools to narrow your search results.)

Step 7: Select articles you want by clicking in box next to article title.
Step 8: Click on "Send to" (upper right corner of page).

Step 9: Select "Clipboard", then "Add to Clipboard" (This enables you to run other searches on the same topic and add selected titles to the Clipboard- before saving to your email. (The clipboard only holds items for 12 hours so you need to send them to your email when you finish so you don't lose them).
Step 10: When finished searching your topic, click on "Clipboard" (upper right corner of page).
Step 11: Click on "Send to" (just to left of Clipboard).
Step 12: Select "Email"; click on "Number to send" and make sure the number is higher than the number of titles you selected; type in your email address and enter a subject title in Subject box. (If you register as a user on PubMed you also have the option of sending to a "collection" for personal use.)
Step 13: Check your email for your search.
Step 14: Keep detailed records of all your searches so that you can reproduce them.

** Note: this is a very basic recipe using PubMed to get started. Work with your medical librarian to develop how-to guides for other databases.