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Experimental search engine for worldwide web clinical content

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Overview

CliniWeb is a multi-lingual (English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian), logically organised search engine of clinical websites, created and maintained by Oregon Health Sciences University. Medical Subject Headings of disease and anatomy (MeSH), have been used to divide over 10,000 clinical sites into a hierarchical tree.

Each site is categorised by title, location, URL and indexing terms. By only including those sites targeted at the health care profession student or practitioner, a moderately advanced standard is maintained. The site is navigable by a free text search, which maps to the closest MeSH term, or by browsing through the MeSH tree, expanding and contracting nodes, as required to find a specific site. MeSH disease terms are linked to PubMed, the free MEDLINE system at the National Library of Medicine (NLM). For each term, there are four links. Each of these links has a 'canned' search on reviews, therapy articles, disease articles or all articles. This, in effect, produces four pre-prepared searches, allowing rapid access.

Content

The site is quick and easy to navigate, although it would help to have a small diagram, showing one's location within the tree. At the top of the tree are nine broad topics: anatomy, organisms, diseases, chemicals & drugs, analytical, diagnostic & therapeutic, techniques & equipment, psychiatry & psychology and biological sciences. These then divide and subdivide, producing an average of eight different tiers.

In the case of the disease branch, the ultimate 'leaf' is a link to a PubMed listing of all the articles on potentially highly specific terminology.

Also included are links to MedWeb, Yahoo Health and of particular interest is the Medical Matrix.

Other comments

Although no date is mentioned within the site, they claim to be constantly up-dating the website. At present, the PubMed links that are produced through a search term, are as recent as April 2000.

References

1. CliniWeb International. [<http://www.ohsu.edu/clinweb/>]