

CINAHL Search: Operators

*Boolean Operators,
Wildcards & Truncation*



Sarasota Memorial Health Medical Library

Search Tools

- Operators increase or reduce your search results.
- Operators can improve the relevancy of your search results.
- CINAHL offers a variety of operators including Boolean, Proximity, Wildcard and Truncation
- Boolean Operators are conveniently located in the search interface.
- Proximity Searching is part of the default search options with a proximity setting of N5.

Searching: **CINAHL Ultimate** | [Choose Databases](#)

	Select a Field (optional) ▾	Search	Create Alert
AND ▾			
AND ▾			

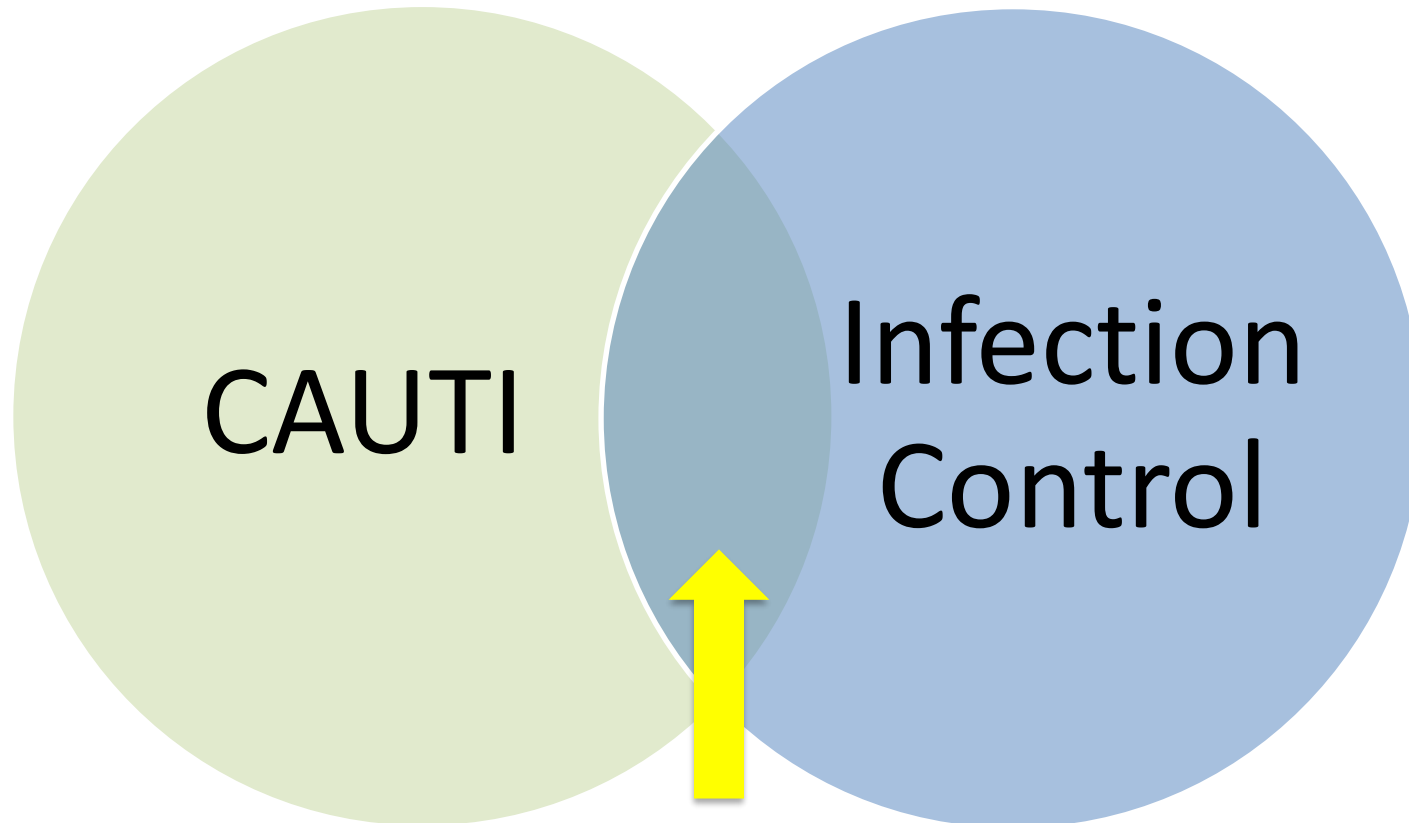
[Clear](#) [?](#)

Operators List

Operator	Example	Retrieves	How it Impacts Your Search
AND	CAUTI AND infection control	Items containing both CAUTI and infection control	Reduces search Results
OR	CAUTI OR catheter infection	Items containing either CAUTI or Catheter Infection	Expands Search Results
NOT	CAUTI NOT Catheter Infection	Items with only CAUTI and not containing the term Catheter Infection	Reduces Search Results. Use this limiter with caution. It may exclude what you need.
Proximity	CAUTI N8 Infection	Items with the term CAUTI and Infection Control within 8 words of each other in any order. CINAHL has a default N5.	Reduces Search Results.
Within	CAUTI W8 Infection Control	Items with the terms CAUTI and Infection Control within 8 words of each other with Infection Control coming after CAUTI.	Reduces Search Results
Phrase	"CAUTI Infection Control"	Items with the exact phrase "CAUTI Infection Control" instead of other items like infection control for CAUTI.	Reduces Search Results
* (wildcard – Truncation)	Pancrea*	Pancreas, Pancreatic, Pancreatitis	Expands Search Results
? (wildcard)	Mo?e	Move, More, Mope, Mode	Expands Search Results
# (wildcard)	Cance#ed	Canceled, Cancelled	Expands Search Results

Boolean Operator - AND

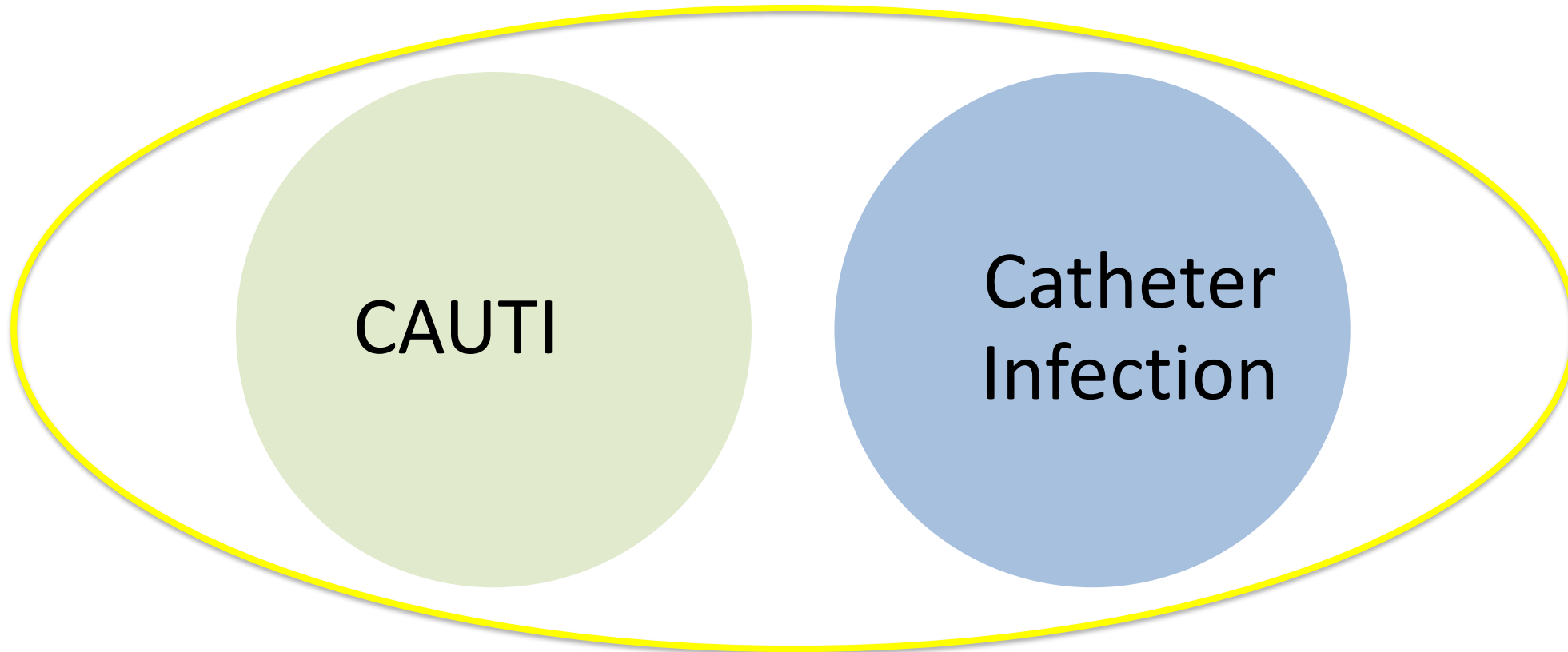
- The AND operator returns only results that contain all the requested terms.



**Results include only items with
both CAUTI and Infection Control**

Boolean Operator - OR

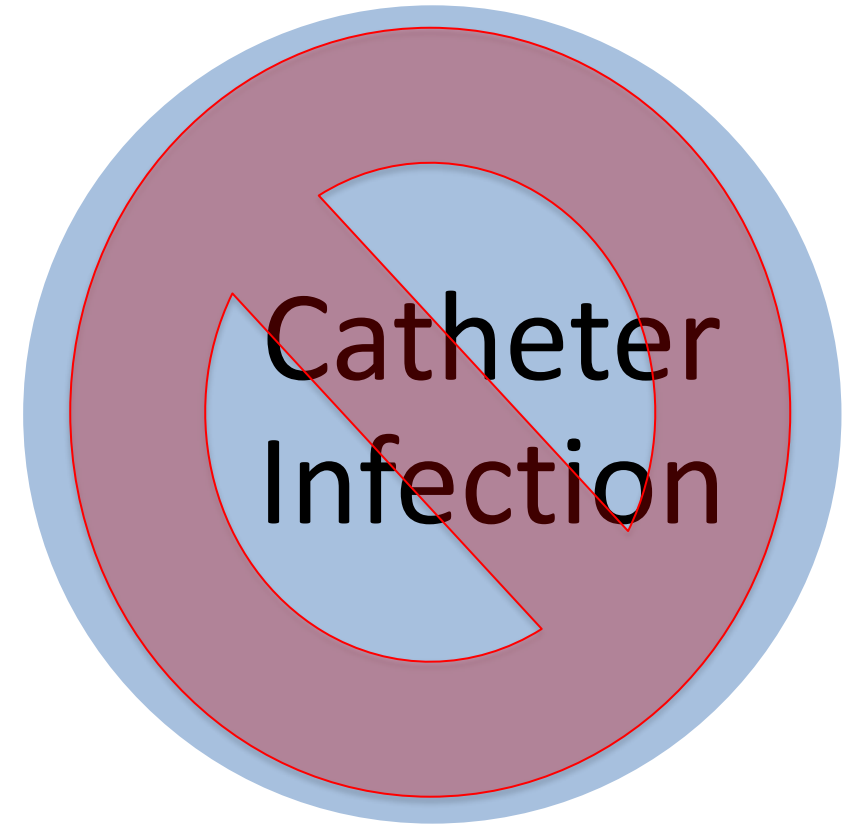
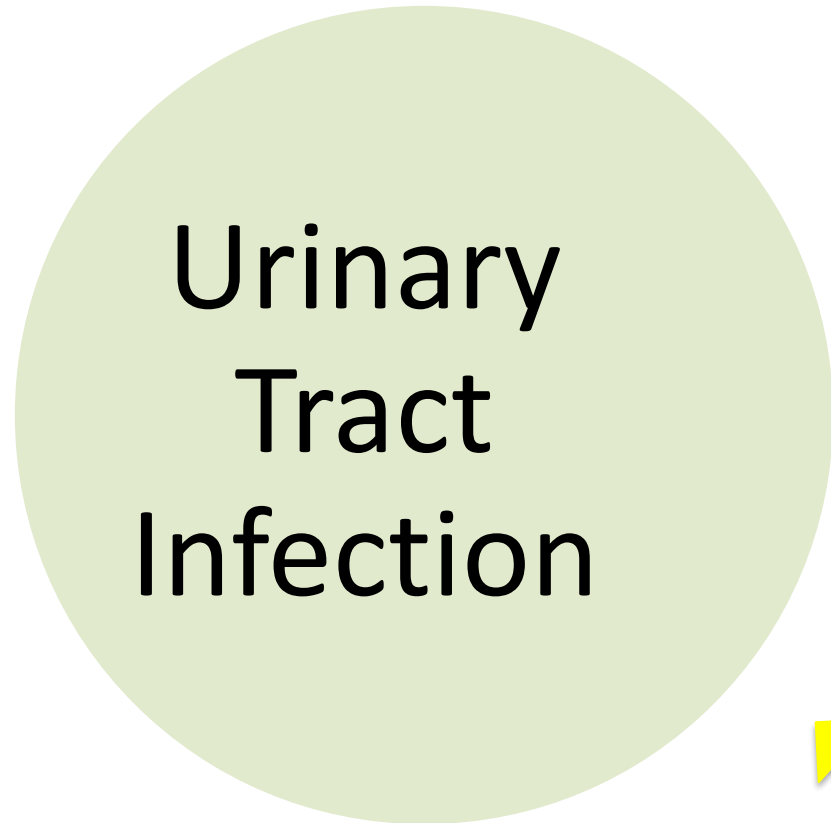
- The OR operator returns results that contain either term.



**Results include all items that
contain either CAUTI or Catheter
Infection**

Boolean Operator - NOT

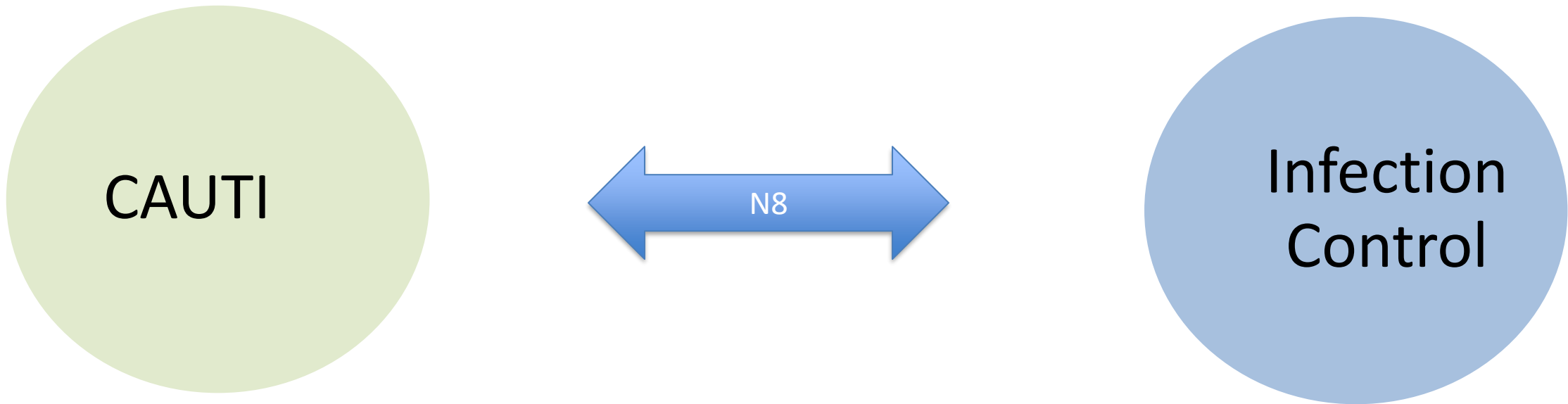
- The NOT operator returns only results that contain the first term and not the second. This will contain any item that contains the second term. Use with Caution!



**Results include only Urinary Tract
Infection and do not contain
Catheter Infection**

Proximity

- Terms appear within a range of each other in any order. Shown as N and the desired proximity

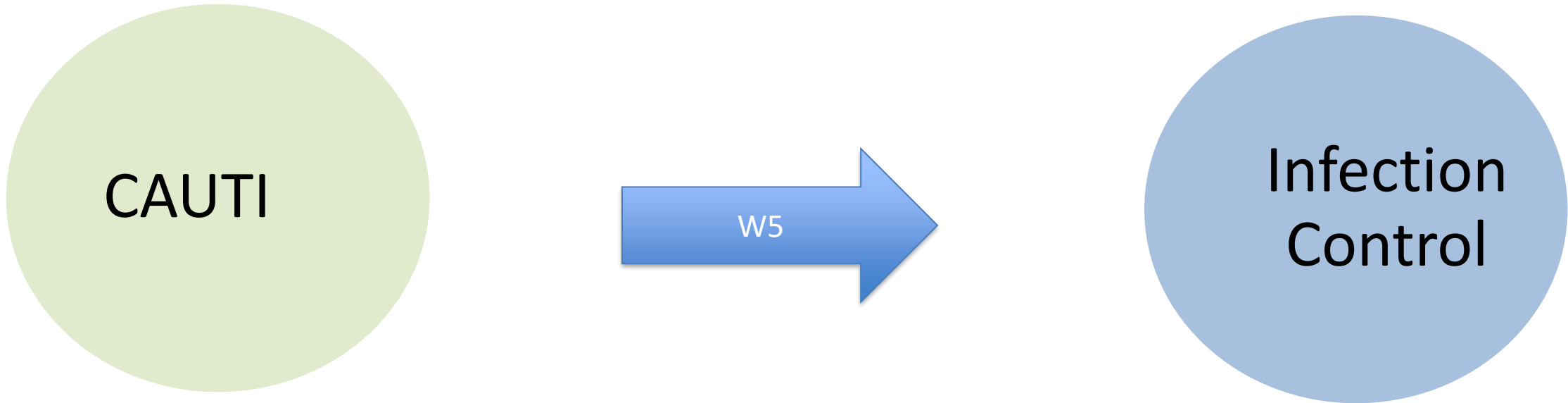


Results include items that contain the two terms within 8 words of each other regardless of which order they appear.

Results can include CAUTI followed by Infection Control or Infection Control followed by CAUTI

Within

- Terms appear within a range of each other with first time appearing first. Shown as W and the desired proximity



Results include only items that contain the two terms within 5 words of each other with CAUTI appearing first followed by Infection Control

Phrase

- Terms appear as they are typed.

“CAUTI Infection Control”

Results include only items that contain the exact phrase “CAUTI Infection Control.” This will exclude results that are on topic but have different wording e.g. *infection control for CAUTI*.

Wildcards

- * wildcard – Generally used to retrieve words with different endings. It works best when there are more than two ending options.

Pancrea*



Pancreas, Pancreatic, Pancreatitis

- ? wildcard – Used to replace an unknown character

Mo?e



More, Move, Mode, Mope

- # wildcard – Generally used to find words with alternative spellings especially for alternative spellings that contain additional letters.

Cance#ed



Canceled, Cancelled

Review

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Contact the Library for Search Assistance and in-person or virtual training.

Email: Medical-Library@SMH.com

Website: <https://library.smh.com/>