Part 2 Transcript

OK….so let us simulate the process of finding answers to clinical questions by using a real-life scenario. Take a moment to read our example scenario. We will use this "statins for dementia" scenario throughout these tutorials.

Before they jump into the large health databases to search for clinical trials on a topic (in this case the use of statins for symptoms of Alzheimer's or dementia) practitioners need to make certain they have a good understanding of the condition, disease and the potential interventions. This is what we refer to as background.

Background information includes general knowledge such as the manifestations of the condition, causes, ways to diagnose, treatment/prevention, prognosis, prevalence. Also, for treatment options, the practitioner needs to be up to speed on: dosing, adverse effects, contraindications, drug interactions, and pharmacokinetics.

If you, as a practitioner, are already quite familiar with the disease and potential interventions, you may need not spend much time on background information. There are several excellent sources for background information, lets take a quick look at three of best.

First let's take a look at MICROMEDEX—which is a comprehensive drug information resource.

As I show examples throughout these tutorials, I will use the Ebling Library homepage as my starting point. To get to MICROMEDEX from the Ebling Library website, look in the left hand Articles/Databases box.

MICROMEDEX is a collection of many different drug databases, including Martindale, the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR), DRUGDEX, DISEASEDEX, POISONDEX, and some alternative medicine databases.

Let's enter Lipitor in the search box, this resource gives you options to choose the different drug databases. Although there is much more info on Lipitor throughout MICROMEDEX, for now we will select DRUG SUMMARY INFORMATION.

As one can see, the drug summary gives a practitioner great background information on:

Drug use such as dosing, situations when you should and should not use the drug, precautions, drug interactions, adverse effects, and also information about the drug itself such as name info, mechanism of action, pharmacokinetics.

Another excellent resource for background information is UpToDate. This resource functions as a very large and current online medical textbook and is superb for filling in gaps in the practitioner's knowledge.

Let's take a look at UptoDate for our clinical scenario. Once again I will start at the Ebling Library website in the left hand Articles/Databases box.

Once in, we can search for Lipitor (or more broadly statins) for the prevention of Alzheimer's.

Here is a good section entitled: Prevention of dementia. We can look at the topic outline for sections relevant to our scenario. Here we see a section on statins. In this section is a very relevant overview of the use of statins for prevention of dementia. Perfect for our scenario.

A final background resource with which you should become familiar is MD Consult. MD Consult is a compendium of several resources. Again let's use the Ebling homepage to get into MDConsult.

Included in MD Consult are tabs for: Books, Journals, The Clinics series of publications, Patient Education, Drugs, Guidelines, Images, News, and more

For background info, the Books tab is very valuable. This section the full contents of 50 of the top clinical textbooks. And what makes this resource so valuable is the ability to conduct a single search throughout all of the texts.

Let's enter the search Statins AND dementia.

Our search retrieved 9 instances of Statins AND dementia near each other. Let's take a look at the first:

Here we see a section entitled Pharmacotherapy in the book Practice of Geriatrics, 4th ed. Again perfect for getting background on our scenario.