Welcome to the Columbia University Health Science Library podcast:

The two faces of PubMed: How free is PubMed?
PubMed has the distinction of providing access to the world's largest and most widely used database of medical literature.

And it's free to search for anyone with access to the World Wide Web. In that respect it is relatively open. That's one face of PubMed.

But what would you say if I told you it's even "freer" and more open to people affiliated with Columbia University or other similar academic institutions.
That's the other face of PubMed, the more friendly face of Pubmed

I'll skip to the most important point and tell you the difference between these two faces of PubMed: it's all about full text.
"Columbia eLink" is your gateway to full text. Columbia eLink is the way for you to optimize your search experience.

It's like knocking on the wrong door of the same house: You'll be turned away if you knock on the wrong door, and you'll get in if you knock on the appropriate door.

The PubMed available by visiting the site www.pubmed.gov provides far less access to full text than the PubMed you can access by clicking through Columbia's webpages, for the simple reason that most fulltext in PubMed requires paid subscriptions. The Columbia University Library system has more than 65,000 subscriptions.

Remember: Use the correct door for the PubMed house. Use Columbia eLink instead of going directly to www.pubmed.gov.

PubMed's two faces on the surface look nearly identical. Each face has the same search features, and you'll be searching the same collection of documents.

The one crucial difference is the presence of a Columbia eLink button on each citation. Clicking on this eLink button starts a search across the inventory of all of Columbia University's 45,000 electronic journal holdings, and it tells you whether instant full text is available to Columbia affiliates.

You can only make this "one-click-to-full-text" feature available by entering PubMed through Columbia's library pages. Let me explain how to best approach PubMed.

Columbia eLink: Step-by-step Instructions
First, point your web browser to www.columbia.edu
Then, in the lefthand margin, click "Medical Center"
Then, in the bottom right hand corner under "Faculty Staff & Students," click "Library."
[Or, go directly to http://library.cpmc.columbia.edu/hsl/]

Now, the page you arrive at should be among your bookmarked websites because the Health Sciences Librarians specialize in meeting your health information needs.
We are the Columbia librarians with the most knowledge and expertise in the topics you're likely to be studying or dealing with in the clinical setting.

Once you've arrived at the Health Sciences Library website and bookmarked it for future reference, click "PubMed" in the top center of the page.

Conduct your search exactly as you normally would. PubMed will search the same way it does if you simply go straight to www.pubmed.gov.

But after you click "Go" and your results list appears, you'll see this "freer," more open, more friendly, face of PubMed.

The difference will show up when you see the Columbia eLink button, either under the abstract or to the right of your citation. (Where this button shows up depends on your settings under the "Display" tab. The "Abstract" or "AbstractPlus" views are best for using eLink).

When you click on eLink, a brown-colored popup window should appear and present you with a few options.

This popup window would ideally tell you that your particular citation is available and you can click on the first light blue arrow to go directly to the journal article. In some cases clicking on this arrow takes you to the journal publisher's access-granted, subscribers-only homepage, where you can look through the journal's archives for your item by date, by issue number, or by page number.

But if this is not what your popup window tells you, don't panic.
There's still a chance you have access to a particular journal in paper form.

[Just follow the steps in the eLink popup window from top to bottom, working your way from most to least convenient.]

If the first line tells you that electronic full text is not available,
Simply click on the 2nd light-blue arrow to search CLIO, which is Columbia's online catalog, an inventory of every book, journal, multimedia item, or any other material that the 25 Columbia libraries offer.

If CLIO tells you that the Columbia Libraries do not hold a particular journal you need, click the 3rd light-blue arrow to request the article from a cooperating library outside of the Columbia Libraries system.

This eLink button will appear in other academic databases, too. Be on the lookout for it. If you're searching for journal literature in other databases, so long as you click through

the Columbia University Libraries webpages, the eLink button will be your gateway to full text.

Please send any questions or comments to:
hs-library@columbia.edu

This podcast has been a presentation of the Health Sciences Library, in cooperation with the Columbia Center for New Media in Teaching and Learning. Please subscribe to our podcast series to receive future podcasts about library search tips and strategies, resource updates, and other research-related topics.

To find instant full text access among Columbia University's library holdings, click the "Columbia e-Link" button.

OR

To make this feature available in PubMed, Go to http://library.cpmc.columbia.edu/hsl/, and then click PubMed. Then just search as you normally would in PubMed!

The ideal eLink scenario: Instant full text!

In this pop-up window of options,
click your way through from top to bottom
from most to least convenient:

1. No electronic full text? Then...

2. Paper full text available? If not...

3. Order a copy of the article from a non-Columbia library.