



Signing on to the CMA's new MEDLINE service

Calls and email messages from far and wide arrive at the OSLER Support Desk that manages the CMA's new (and free) MEDLINE service. Many different questions are asked, but most fall into 2 categories: the finer points of successful MEDLINE searching and glitches concerning online registration.

To demystify online registration and make the path to OSLER (Ovid Search: Link to Electronic Resources) smoother, this column will describe how to avoid potential obstacles. We created the online registration process because OSLER is but the first of many online services that will be available exclusively to CMA members. Other MEDLINE searching sites are available for free on the Internet, but none offers the complete databases found within OSLER, the power of the OVID Technology searching interface, or the member-dedicated medical librarian available to help CMA members with their search strategies. Some registrants might find the online registration process cumbersome, but the end result is a service preserved for and exclusive to CMA members.

How to find us

First-time visitors to the OSLER site (www.cma.ca/osler) will begin by clicking on **Register Now!** at the left side of the screen. Select Request Username and Activation Code, and then complete the online form. Once the CMA has received this information, an OSLER registration kit will be sent by mail. Those wishing to receive the information sooner can call **800 457-4205**. Once the activation code and user name have been re-

ceived by phone or mail, the next step is to visit the Internet site again, click Register Now! and then Complete Registration Form.

Online registration

This will take a few minutes. You'll be asked to enter your name and email address, then your user name and activation code. The **user name** is actually your CMA membership number and you will use it every time you log on. However, the activation code is used only once, to activate your account. It may comprise letters or numbers, or a combination of both. It will be provided in capital letters, but is not case sensitive. The registration process is the only time this code is needed. Once the computer system has accepted your user name and activation code, you will be asked to create a password.

This is the place where many CMA members encounter trouble. The password must be at least 6 characters long, in any combination of letters, numbers, or both. You will be asked to enter your password twice to ensure that it is recorded correctly. It is **case sensitive**: if you use capital letters when you create your password, you will have to type it that way every time. Ensure that the Caps Lock key is off when creating your password.

As soon as you see the Congratulations!! message after submitting a password, you are ready to search the MEDLINE, AIDSLINE, CancerLIT and HealthSTAR databases. Click on Begin Your OVID Search Now. A small dialogue box will open and ask for your **user name** (CMA membership number) and newly created password. (Use the Tab key to move from line to line in the dialogue box.) As soon as these 2 essential items are entered, you will be able to select the database you wish to search.

What can go wrong?

The registration process seems straightforward, but it confounds some new users. A common problem is forgetting exactly what password was created during registration or whether it was entered in upper or lower case. Try to choose a password that is the same or similar to others you use regularly. If you attempt to enter OVID with 3 or more incorrect guesses at your password, the system will lock you out. (This built-in defence mechanism is designed to prevent hacking.) If you've forgotten your password, receive a message that you have been locked out or simply want to change your password, call **800 457-4205** for password-resetting instructions. You can also send an email message to service@cma.ca.

Some users think that the unique activation code and user name are the 2 pieces of information required to log on to OSLER. If these are entered the message Activation Failed will appear because the system needs the password that only you can create. Once you are actively searching, remember that you can send email for help from every screen by clicking on **Ask a CMA Librarian**, by sending email to cmalibrary@sympatico.ca or by phoning **800 663-7336, x2255**. — *Deidre Green*, OSLER support librarian, CMA

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