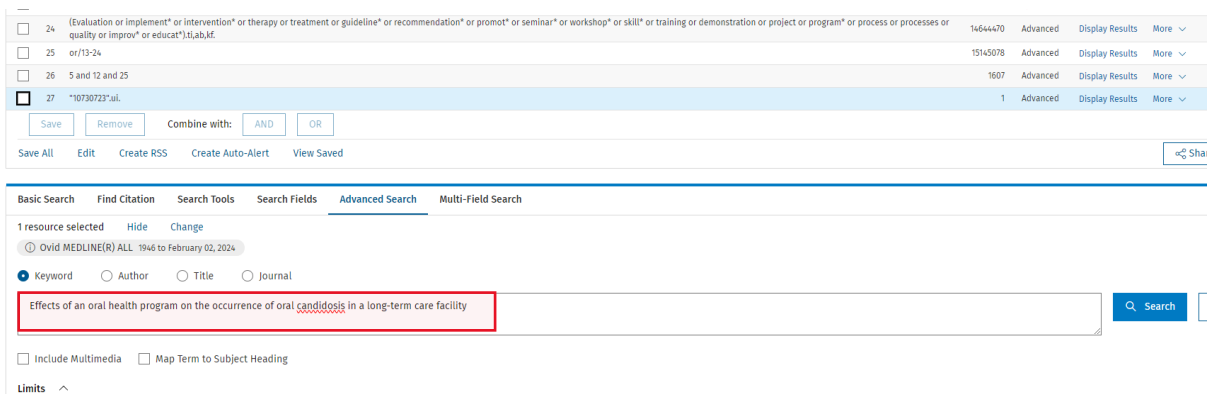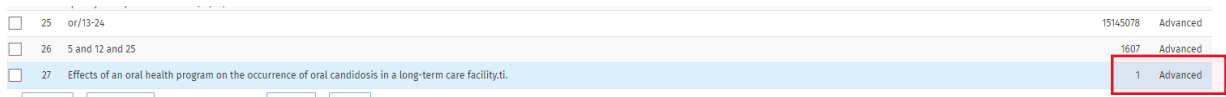# How to 'test' a search

If you already have some papers that you know should be included in your review, you can use these to 'test' that your search retrieves papers that you would expect it to.

The examples below show how to test a search in the Ovid Medline database. However, the principles will apply to any database and platform.

1. Run your search in one of your databases (usually Medline is a good database to use for this).

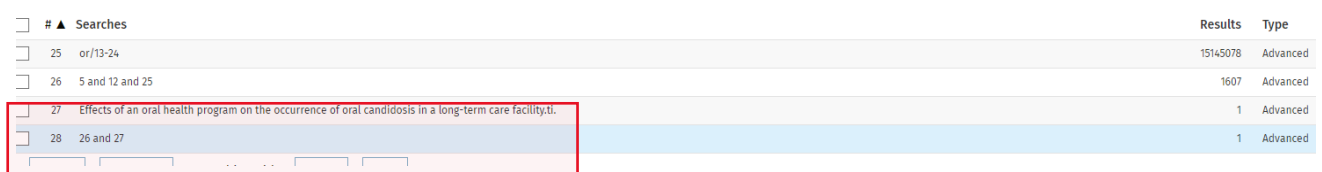2. Do a search for the title of your test paper:

If the paper is indexed in the database, you should get one result for the search for the title:

If you get 0 results, it may mean the paper is not indexed in the database – you will need to test a different paper or try a different database.

3. Combine the last line of your search with the search for the title of the paper using AND:

If the paper is in your search results you will get 1 result – this means your search has found this paper:

# ▲	Searches	Results	Type
25	or/13-24	15145078	Advanced
26	5 and 12 and 25	1607	Advanced
27	Effects of an oral health program on the occurrence of oral candidosis in a long-term care facility.ti.	1	Advanced
28	26 and 27	1	Advanced

If you get 0 results, the paper is not in your search results which means your search does not find the paper:

# ▲	Searches	Results	Type	
25	or/13-24	15145078	Advanced	
26	5 and 12 and 25	1607	Advanced	
27	Potentially preventable dental care in operating rooms for children enrolled in Medicaid.ti.	1	Advanced	
28	26 and 27	0	Advanced	

Save   Remove   Combine with: AND   OR

If your search does not find the paper, you may need to adjust your search strategy.