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The Growth of Food-Diet-Nutrition Literature in PubMed

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The Growth of Food-Diet-Nutrition Literature in PubMed

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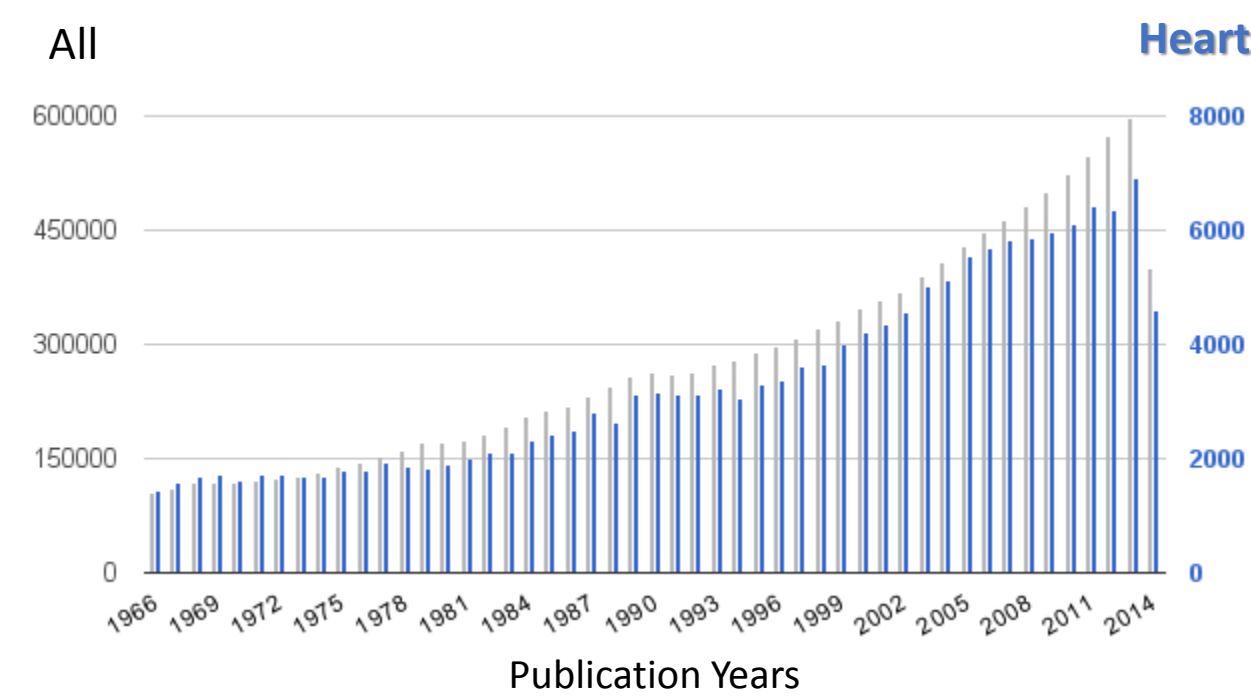


Figure 1. Comparison of numbers of publications by year: grey lines represent numbers of all human subject articles, and blue lines represent numbers of human subject articles with the title word, heart.

Since its launching in 1966, the number of citations added in MEDLINE/PubMed grows larger each year, as the number of articles published grows.

As shown in Figure 1 on the left, for many subjects in PubMed, the growth of citations on particular subjects (e.g. heart) shares a similar trend with that of all citations. **Food-diet-nutrition (FDN)** subjects, however, are exceptions.

As shown in Figures 2 & 3 on the right, the numbers of articles on FDN subjects remained steadily low up until about 1990 but grew sharply after around 1990.

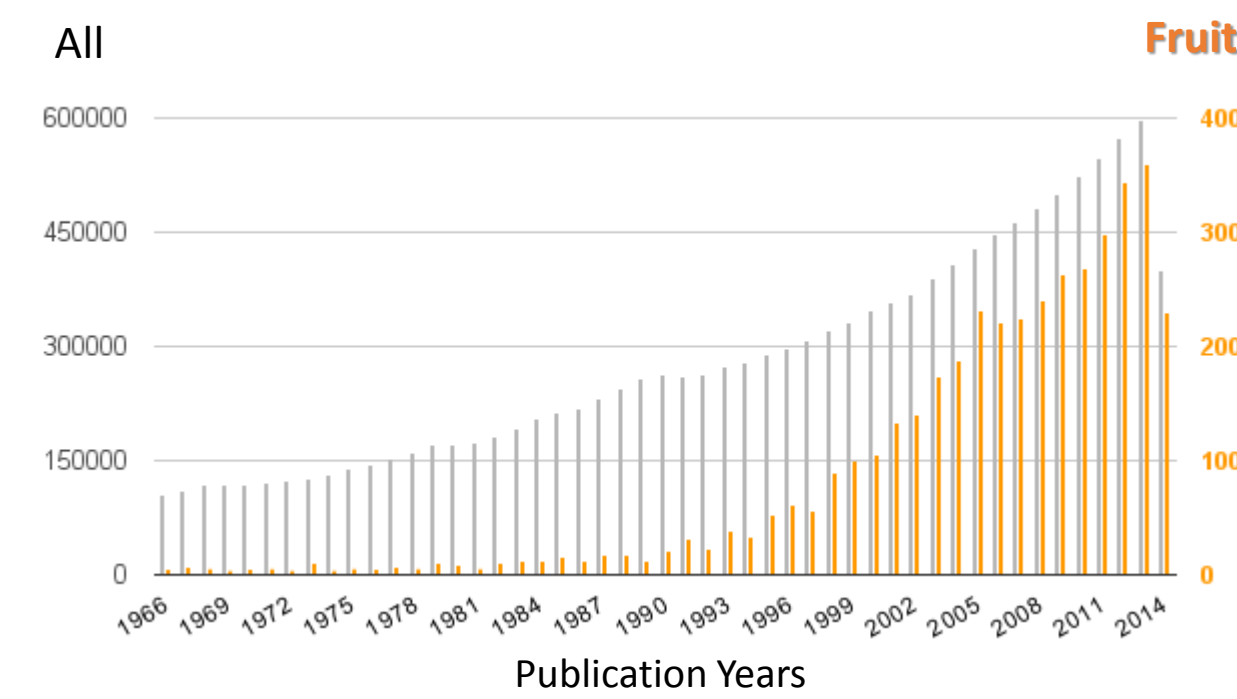


Figure 2. Comparison of numbers of publications by year: grey lines represent numbers of all human subject articles, and orange lines represent numbers of human subject articles with the title words, fruits OR fruit.

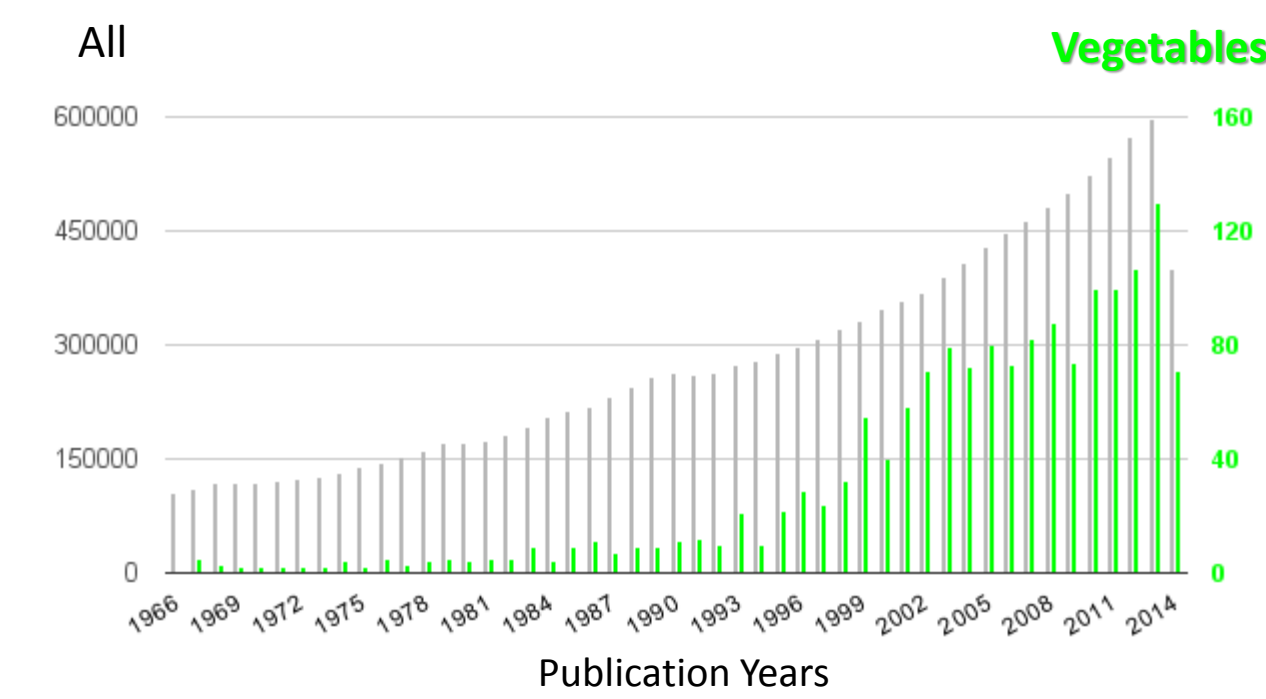


Figure 3. Comparison of numbers of publications by year: grey lines represent numbers of all human subject articles, and green lines represent numbers of human subject articles with the title word, vegetables.

Why is this important?

We have written extensively about the problems of searching for FDN subjects in PubMed:

PubMed misses the big picture when it comes to nutrition.
<http://www.kevinmd.com/blog/2015/02/pubmed-misses-big-picture-comes-nutrition.html>.

We see this as being connected to the pattern we have found in the rapid growth of publications on FDN subjects since around 1990. We think that the poor treatment of FDN subjects in PubMed shows that NLM has not fully recognized the magnitude of the subject.

Publications by Year for Food and Food-related Subjects 1966-2014

The charts below, for specific foods and food-related subjects, show similar publication trends: a sharp growth since around 1990. Title word searches were performed in MEDLINE/PubMed, and results were limited to human subjects.

