



Website User Guide

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1. Introduction

searchMECFS is an interactive online data query tool for navigating biospecimens available for research purposes from studies of myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). The goal of searchMECFS is to facilitate biospecimen selection based on phenotypic and clinical attributes of study participants who contributed biospecimen samples, and to initiate the process of applying for access to selected biospecimens.

2. Managing your User Account

2.1 How to request access to searchMECFS

Users must register to access the data query functionality. From the Login page, click Register.



The screenshot shows the searchMECFS website header with the logo on the left and navigation links for Home, Data Query, and About on the right. Below the header is a login form with two input fields: "E-Mail Address:" and "Password:", each followed by a text box with an asterisk. Below the fields are three buttons: "Login" (dark blue), "Register" (light blue, circled in red), and "Reset Password" (light blue).

Provide the requested information, including your desired password and reason for requesting access to the system. Passwords must be at least 8 characters long and contain at least one letter and one number. Your registration request will be reviewed for approval. You will receive an email notification informing you whether your request was approved or denied.

2.2 Resetting your Password

From the Login page, select Reset Password.



The screenshot shows the searchMECFS website header with the logo on the left and navigation links for Home, Data Query, and About on the right. Below the header is a login form with two input fields: "E-Mail Address:" and "Password:", each followed by a text box with an asterisk. Below the fields are three buttons: "Login" (dark blue), "Register" (light blue), and "Reset Password" (light blue, circled in red).

You will be prompted to enter your email address. After submitting your email address, a link with a temporary password will be emailed to your email address. When you login using this temporary password, will be required to create a new password.

3. Performing Data Queries

3.1 Query Tool Page Layout

The interactive query tool can be used to build and execute data queries to find available biospecimens that meet your specified search criteria.



Available search criteria are listed in the search bar dropdown list. A red search bar indicates that the current search condition is incomplete or invalid. Upon opening the dropdown list and selecting a variable of interest, the search bar will display additional options to allow you to specify values or ranges based on the data type of the variable (e.g., Yes/No values, controlled vocabulary, value ranges, etc.). When a valid search criterion has been created, the search bar will no longer appear red and the query statement will be displayed below the search bar.



Click Search to execute the query. The system displays a list of deidentified available biospecimens that match your search criteria.

3.2 Building Queries

You can add multiple search criteria to further enhance your search and limit the results. Queries consist of rules and groups and are applied using ANY or ALL logic to discover data of interest.

3.2.1 Query Rules

A rule is a single search condition that appears on a single line of the search bar. Multiple rules may be executed together using the applied logic (see the ALL/ANY Logic section below). To add a new rule to your query, click Add Rule in the upper right corner of the search bar. An additional empty search bar appears. There is no limit to the number of rules you can add to a query.

ME/CFS_Case_or_Control = "Control Participant" AND Site = "Florida"

Apply for access to the biospecimens through NINDS

3.2.2 All/Any Logic

“ALL” logic indicates that only data records which meet all search conditions will be included in the results set. This is equivalent to AND logic. “ANY” logic indicates data records which meet any of the search conditions will be included in the results set. This is equivalent to OR logic. Select the ALL or ANY option at the top left section of the search bar to apply the appropriate logic to your query.

ME/CFS_Case_or_Control = "Control Participant" OR Site = "Florida"

Apply for access to the biospecimens through NINDS

3.2.3 Query Groups

A group is a collection of rules that are executed together. Multiple rules in the base query are executed as a group. You can add more groups to your query. Each will be added as a subquery (also known as a nested query) within the target group. The rules of the group will be used with other rules in the query to fine tune your results. Added groups appear in the search statement enclosed in parentheses. Groups may be added within groups. There is no limit to the number of groups that can be added to a query or within another group.

Added groups appear in an indented search bar within the overall search bar. Each group has its own ALL/ANY logic.

ALL ANY + Add rule + Add group

ME/CFS Case or Control equal Control Participant ✖ Delete

Site equal Florida ✖ Delete

ALL ANY + Add rule + Add group ✖ Delete

Race equal White ✖ Delete

Hispanic equal No Yes ✖ Delete

ME/CFS_Case_or_Control = "Control Participant" OR Site = "Florida" OR (Race = "White" AND Hispanic = "Yes")

Apply for access to the biospecimens through NINDS

3.2.4 Editing Queries

Query details can be edited at any time. You can remove existing rules or groups by clicking the red Delete button to the right of the corresponding rule or group.

3.2.5 Running Queries

When your query details have been entered, click Search to execute the query. The system will display the results which meet your search criteria.

Race equal White ✖ Delete

Hispanic equal No Yes ✖ Delete

Condition = "Control Participant" AND Site = "Miami, FL" AND (Race = "White" OR Hispanic = "Yes")

Apply for access to the biospecimens through NINDS

Found 391 specimens from 40 participants.

Participant ID	Specimen Type	Specimen Quantity	Available Inventory
CFI-10010	DNA	3 ug	70
CFI-10010	PBMC	5 x10 ⁶	1

Each row in the results set represents a quantity of a specific biospecimen type from a specific deidentified study participant. The count at the top of the results set indicates the number of unique biospecimens in the results set and the number of study participants from whom they were collected.

3.2.6 Saving Queries

Any valid query (i.e., any query with no red search bars) can be saved. To save a query, click the Save Query button. The system will display a pop-up and prompt you to enter a name for your query. The Save Query button on the pop-up is disabled until a valid name is entered for the query.

Note that you **must** click Save Query to save the query – hitting the Enter or Return key will not save the query.



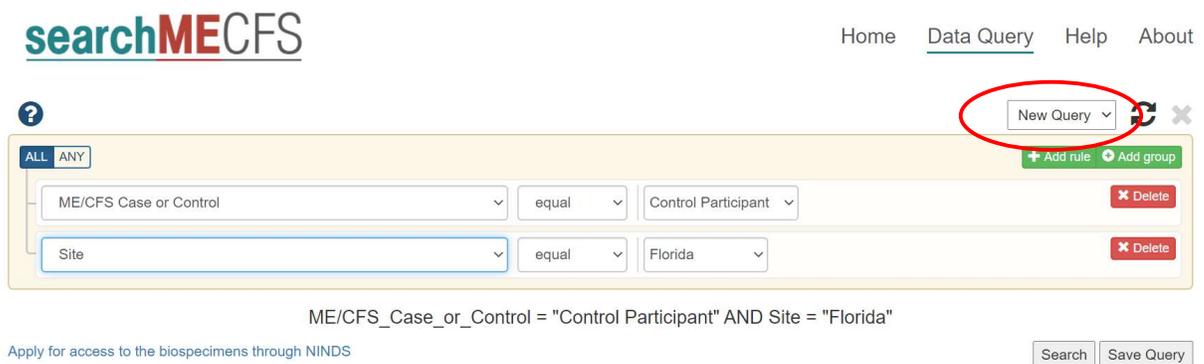
A query name must:

- Contain at least one non-space character
- Be unique to the user who is saving it

If you enter an existing query name, the Save Query button will not enable.

3.2.7 Retrieving Queries

You can retrieve saved queries by clicking on the Query dropdown list in the upper right corner of the query page. The Query list defaults to the New Query option.



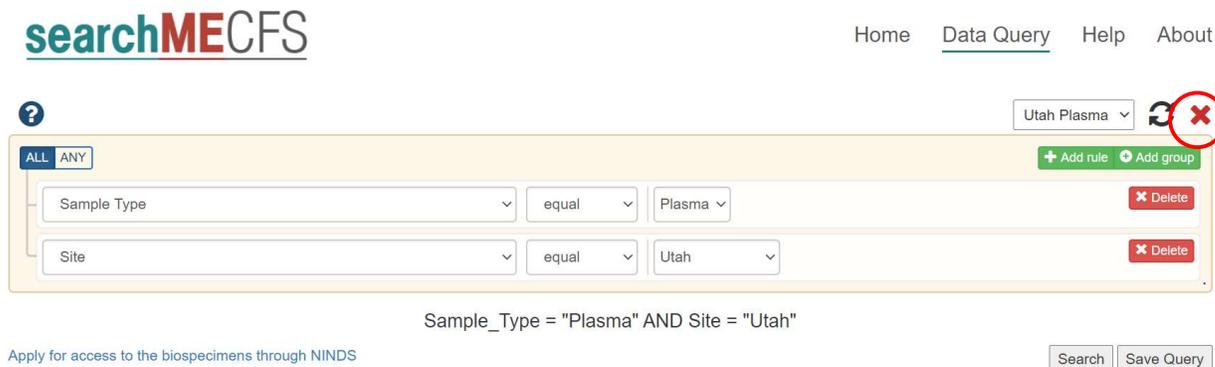
You can retrieve saved queries by clicking on the Query dropdown list in the upper right corner of the query page and selecting a displayed Saved query. The Query list defaults to the New Query option.

Note

- Selecting a saved query will only populate the search bar with the saved search criteria. The user must click Search to execute the saved query.
- A saved query only saves search criteria. It does *not* save search results. Because the available quantity of biospecimens may change in quantity (e.g. as additional requests are fulfilled), it is possible that the same query executed at different times may return different results.
- The Saved Query list consists only of queries saved by the current user.

3.2.8 Deleting Queries

You can delete a Saved query by selecting that query and clicking the Delete Query button – the red X icon to the right of the Query dropdown list. If the Query list is displaying the New Query option, the Delete Query button is disabled.

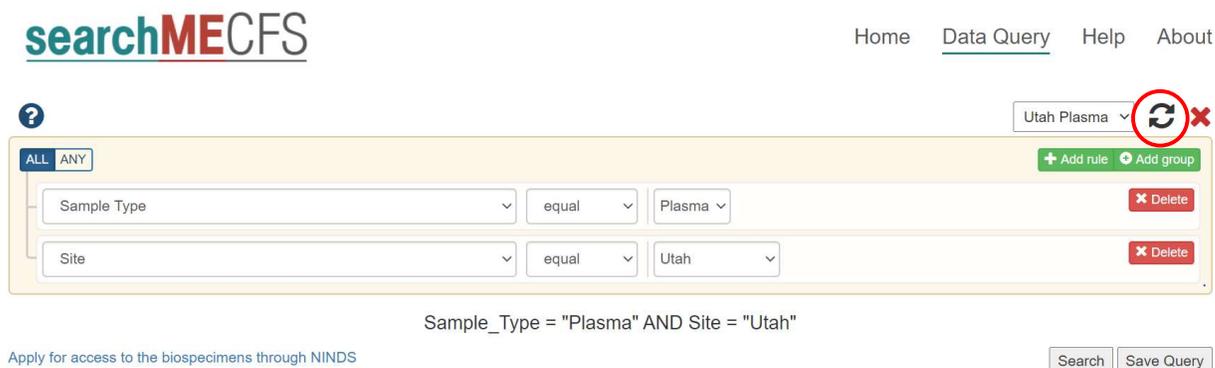


3.2.9 Resetting Queries

You can reset the search bar by:

- Selecting New Query from the Query dropdown list; or
- Clicking the Reset Query button in the top right area of the search bar.

Resetting a query has no impact on Saved queries.



4. How to request biospecimens

When you have found the samples of interest, click the "Apply for access to the biospecimens through NINDS" link under the search tool. This will take you to the NINDS BRAC Application page, which has instructions and document links to enable you to request the biospecimens of interest. Note that the BRAC Application page and linked documents are owned and managed by the NINDS.