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# Filtering the UMLS<sup>®</sup> Metathesaurus<sup>®</sup> for MetaMap

2005 Edition

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## 1. Overview

The MetaMap program's primary purpose is to discover the Metathesaurus concepts referred to in arbitrary text. A given Metathesaurus concept can have many alternative names (Metathesaurus strings) which originate in the many source vocabularies included in the Metathesaurus. As the number of strings has grown over the years, MetaMap's performance has suffered. In 2005, for example, the Metathesaurus has 2,812,599 English strings, 2791,810 (99.3%) of them distinct, comprising 1,172,120 concepts. There were 16% more English strings and 19% more concepts than in the 2004 edition. Many of the strings in the Metathesaurus are of little value to MetaMap for one of four reasons. First, some strings either represent general, nonmedical concepts or are unnecessarily ambiguous. Second, some strings are virtually indistinguishable from each other. For efficiency, only one representative of a set of indistinguishable strings is needed. Third, some Metathesaurus strings have internal structure or meta information which makes it highly unlikely to find them in regular text. Fourth, some strings, including lengthy descriptions of things such as procedures, health activities or medical devices, are so complicated that it is again unlikely to find them in normal text. Corresponding to the four classes of strings are four filtering methods for discovering and removing them: manual filtering, lexical filtering, filtering by type, and syntactic filtering. These methods are discussed in sections 2-5. Then section 6 describes ways to selectively combine the filtering methods to produce a range of alternative views of the Metathesaurus appropriate for various purposes.

## 2. Manual Filtering

A number of Metathesaurus strings are problematic and have been suppressed before performing other forms of filtering. There are 12,102 such strings, 22% less than in 2004 (due to the over-counting of already suppressed strings in the previous year):

- Unnecessarily ambiguous terms [1,939 occurrences]
  - “Other <2>” for “Other location of complaint”
  - “Protocols <3>” for “Protocols: Urinary Elimination”
  - ...
- Contextual terms, i.e., terms whose meaning can only be understood within the context of their vocabulary [7,424 occurrences]
  - All terms containing *NEC* or an expanded form
- Brand names, i.e., all terms containing the word *brand* [2,522 occurrences]
- Numbers (e.g., 2, +1, -4, 98.734, 50000) [156 occurrences];
- Single alphabetic characters (e.g., a, A, b, B <3>; note the ambiguity designator) [59 occurrences];
- Special cases [2 occurrences]
  - “Periods” (from RCD) for “Menstruation” (slang)
  - “BRA” (from RCD) for “Brain” (abbreviation)

The Metathesaurus staff has simply chosen some terms that are marked as suppressible synonyms because they are thought to be inappropriate for any use. These (generally ambiguous) terms are terms that, for one reason or another, do not adequately describe the concept that contains them. They are given a Term Status (TS) of lowercase s (or p) and are discussed in the annual editions of *Ambiguity in the UMLS Metathesaurus*. Contextual terms are actually a specific kind of ambiguous term. They are identifiable by the presence of *NEC* or one of its expansions (e.g., not elsewhere classified). Brand names are problematic because they often consist of a common word (e.g., *Cold*) which almost never has the brand name meaning. Although a few numbers correspond to biomedical entities (“98.734” has semantic types ‘Steroid’ and ‘Pharmacologic Substance’), they generally have semantic types ‘Quantitative Concept’ or ‘Intellectual Product’. Similarly, the single alphabetic characters generally mean the letter itself (the concept for “a” is “Lower case ay”) and have semantic type ‘Intellectual Product’. Several single alphabetic characters, however, are biomedical: “B” has concept “Boron” with semantic type ‘Element, Ion, or Isotope’. A final class of special cases includes the string “Periods” for “Menstruation” and “BRA” for “Brain”. Both of these are problematic because they are ambiguous with other concepts which occur far more frequently in biomedical text.

## 3. Lexical Filtering

Lexical filtering is the most benign type of filtering and consists of removing strings for a concept which are effectively the same as another string for the concept. Properties which can make strings effectively the same are:

- non-essential parentheticals;
- *NOS* variation;

- syntactic uninversion;
- case variation;
- hyphen variation; and
- possessives.

Lexical filtering is accomplished by normalizing all strings for a given concept and removing all but one string for each set of strings that normalize to the same thing.

### 3.1 Non-essential parentheticals

Non-essential parentheticals are parenthetical expressions within a string which provide meta information about the string. As such they are not useful for text processing. Non-essential parentheticals can occur at the left or right end of a string and can be delimited by either parentheses or brackets. For example the concept “Anemia, Hemolytic” has synonyms “[X]Haemolytic anemias” and “[X]Hemolytic anemias” both of which contain the left parenthetical *[X]*. Previous editions of the Metathesaurus only contained right parentheticals which seemed to be relatively well-behaved in the sense that a string without the parenthetical was almost always present in the set of strings for a given concept. Thus, “Drug Toxicity (Non MeSH)” had a string “Drug Toxicity”. Now right parentheticals are much less well-behaved and only a few left parentheticals can be reliably removed without altering the string’s meaning. These left parentheticals come from the Read Codes: *[X]*, *[V]*, *[D]*, *[M]*, *[EDTA]*, *[SO]* and *[Q]*. These are the only parentheticals declared to be non-essential and removed from strings. The problem of detecting non-essential parentheticals has changed as the Metathesaurus has matured. The current practice of removing the few left parentheticals listed above is by no means adequate. The problem requires further analysis.

### 3.2 NOS variation

Many of the Metathesaurus vocabularies incorporate the acronym *NOS* (*Not Otherwise Specified*) into their terms. Examples include “Abdomen, NOS” and “X-RAY NEC AND NOS”. As with case variation, the presence of *NOS* (except when also accompanied by *NEC*) does not generally have a significant effect on the meaning of the term. The argument for ignoring *NOS* variation is not as strong as that for case variation, but it still seems reasonable for most text processing.

### 3.3 Syntactic uninversion

Inversion refers to the practice of inverting words of a term and inserting a comma to signal the inversion. It is normally done to index the original term under each of its important words and thereby make it more accessible. Inverted forms of a term, however, are not useful for processing text since inverted forms rarely appear in text. The concept “1,4-alpha-Glucan Branching Enzyme” has some interesting inversions. It has a synonym “Branching Enzyme” with inversion “Enzyme, Branching”, and it also has a synonym “Starch Branching Enzyme” with two inversions, “Branching Enzyme, Starch” and “Enzyme, Starch Branching”. The process of uninversion simply undoes inversion, i.e., it searches for a comma followed by a space, inverts the term at that point and removes the comma and space. Syntactic uninversion is just uninversion which is inhibited if the term contains a preposition or conjunction. This prevents terms such as “Biological Phenomena, Cell Phenomena, and Immunity” or “Legal blindness, as defined in U.S.A.” from being incorrectly uninverted. Note that the concept “1,4-alpha-Glucan Branching Enzyme” men-

tioned earlier is also not uninverted because the comma within it is not followed by a space; such embedded commas do not call for uninversion.

### 3.4 Case variation

Two strings which differ from each other only because of case variation normally refer to the same thing. For example, the concept “Abdomen <1>” has strings “Abdomen”, “abdomen” and “ABDOMEN” which differ from each other only by case. Similarly, the concept “beta-Alanine” has strings, “beta Alanine”, “beta alanine” and “BETA ALANINE”, which differ from each other only by case. Note, however, that case *does* matter for some aspects of text processing. Text containing the pronoun *us* is not referring to the acronym *US* for the *United States*; and the verb *aids* does not refer to the disease *AIDS*. Despite this observation, case almost never matters within the limited context of all strings for a given concept.

### 3.5 Hyphen variation

As with case variation, the presence of a hyphen rather than a space normally means little especially in the context of all strings for a given concept. For example, the concept “1,4-alpha-Glucan Branching Enzyme” used in the last section has a variant “1,4 alpha Glucan Branching Enzyme” in which both hyphens have been replaced by spaces.

### 3.6 Possessives

Alternatives such as “Down’s Syndrome” and “Down Syndrome” or “American Nurses’ Association” and “American Nurses Association” differ only by a possessive.

## 4. Filtering by Type

Some Metathesaurus strings can be filtered out based solely on their type. For example, strings with a Term Status (TS) of lowercase *s* or *p* are suppressible synonyms or suppressible preferred names (see section 2 above). “Abdomen” is such a synonym of “Malignant neoplasm of abdomen.” About 5% (133,415) of the 2,812,599 English Metathesaurus strings are suppressible synonyms. There are also a small number (673) of strings with TS of lowercase *p*.

Similarly, some Term Type (TTY) values indicate strings which are normally inappropriate for text processing, often because they are abbreviatory in nature, have some internal structure or include some meta information (see section 4.1 below). There are 720,698 occurrences of strings with such term types in the Metathesaurus. Actually there is a non-trivial overlap between these inappropriate term types and the suppressible synonyms: 126,966 (18%) of the 720,698 TTY strings are already suppressible synonyms or preferred names.

The filtered out term types together with examples for each are given in the next section. For completeness, this is followed by a section of questionable types and a final section of good types.

#### 4.1 Filtered out Types

- AA (Attribute type abbreviation) [34 occurrences]  
 “Route administration of drug” (for concept “Drug Administration Routes”)  
 “Type-partial denture connector” (for concept “Type of partial denture connector”)
- AB (Abbreviation in any source vocabulary) [80,520 occurrences]  
 “Cluster of diff antigen 73” (for term “Cluster of differentiation antigen 73” of concept “5’-Nucleotidase”)  
 “AIDS dementia complex” (for concept “AIDS Dementia Complex”; note that in this case the AB string is not unusual, but it is redundant)
- CDA (Clinical drug name in abbreviated format) [19,163 occurrences]  
 “BEESWAX MISCELL. WAX (GM)”  
 “CASTOR OIL MISCELL. OIL”
- CDC (Clinical drug name in concatenated format (NDDF), Clinical drug name (NDFRT)) [29,610 occurrences]  
 “ALCOHOL %”  
 “BEESWAX MISCELL. WAX (GM)”
- CDD (Clinical drug name in delimited format) [19,163 occurrences]  
 “BEESWAX@@MISCELL.@WAX (GM)”  
 “CASTOR OIL@@MISCELL.@OIL”
- CO (ICPC component names (these are hierarchical terms, as opposed to the LOINC component names which are analytes)) [57 occurrences]  
 Like topical qualifiers (TQ), these terms seem to have a meaning too specific to be useful for most biomedical applications  
 “ACTIVITY COMPONENT”  
 “CARDIAC COMPONENT”
- CS (Short component process in ICPC, i.e. include some abbreviations) [13 occurrences]  
 “Med exam/health evalua/complete”  
 “Microbio/other immunol test”
- DFA (Dose Form Abbreviation) [106 occurrences]  
 “CAP”  
 “GEL”
- FN (Full form of descriptor) [304,160 occurrences]  
 “Dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine (substance)”  
 “Acute abdomen (disorder)”
- HS (Short hierarchical term (needed expansion) in ICD 10) [181 occurrences]  
 “Agents primarily acting on smooth and skeletal muscles and the respiratory system”  
 “Bacterial vaccines”

- HX (Expanded version of short hierarchical term) [5,577 occurrences]  
“D40-D44 ABDOMEN” (for concept “Abdomen”; the HX form occurs in SNMI98 and has an HT form “ABDOMEN”)  
“SECTION 2 CONGENITAL ANOMALIES” (for concept “Congenital Abnormality”; the HX form occurs in SNMI98 and has an HT form “CONGENITAL ANOMALIES”)
- LN (LOINC official fully specified name) [34,633 occurrences]  
“ALMECILLIN:SUSC:PT:ISLT:ORDQN:MIC”  
“ALMECILLIN:SUSC:PT:ISLT:ORDQN:AGAR DIFFUSION”
- LO (Obsolete official fully specified name) [1,035 occurrences]  
“AUREOBASIDIUM PULLULANS AB.IGE:ACNC:PT:SER:QN”  
“PARROT AUSTRALIAN DROPPINGS AB.IGE:ACNC:PT:SER:QN”
- LX (Official fully specified name with expanded abbreviations) [35,637 occurrences]  
“ALMECILLIN:SUSCEPTIBILITY:POINT IN TIME:ISOLATE:QUANTITATIVE:MINIMUM INHIBITORY CONCENTRATION”  
“ALMECILLIN:SUSCEPTIBILITY:POINT IN TIME:ISOLATE:SEMI-QUANTITATIVE:BACTERIAL SENSITIVITY (KIRBY-BAUER)”
- OA (Obsolete abbreviation) [49,131 occurrences]  
“Gastrin secretion abnorm.NOS”  
“Spontaneous abort.incomp.NOS”
- OCD (Obsolete clinical drug) [137,123 occurrences]  
“BEESWAX MISC. WAX (GM)”  
“CASTOR OIL MISC. OIL”
- PS (Short forms that needed full specification) [3,175 occurrences]  
“Cranial nerves” (for concept “Benign neoplasm of cranial nerves”)  
“Bladder, unspecified” (for concept “Malignant neoplasm of bladder, NOS”)
- RAB (Root abbreviation) [131 occurrences]  
“DSM3R”  
“MSH”
- SB (Named subset of a source) [1 occurrence]  
“US English Dialect Subset”
- UCN (Unique common name) [168 occurrences]  
“canaries <genus>”  
“monkeys <#2>”
- USN (Unique scientific name) [830 occurrences]  
“Acremonium <Hypocreaceae>”

“Aedes <sugbenus>”

“Bacillus <bacterium>”

- USY (Unique synonym) [49 occurrences]  
“Chlamydia psittaci <Chlamydophila psittaci>”  
“AsGV<agrotis>”
- VAB (Versioned abbreviation) [128 occurrences]  
“SPN2003”  
“GO2004\_03\_02”  
“MSH2005\_2004\_10\_12”
- XM (Cross mapping set) [4 occurrences]  
“MSH Associated Expressions”  
“SNOMEDCT mappings to ICD-9-CM”
- XX (Expanded string) [69 occurrences]  
“superior frontal sulcus (human only)”  
“ectocalcarine sulcus (macaque only)”

#### 4.2 Questionable Types

The Term Types listed in this section are not actually filtered out during type filtering, but they present problems for processing text adequately.

- BD (Fully-specified drug brand name that can be prescribed) [16,393 occurrences]  
These terms describe a quantity of some drug; they may or may not occur in text.  
“Adalat, 10 mg oral capsule”  
“Afrin, 0.05% nasal spray”
- CC (Trimmed ICPC component process) [1 occurrence]  
“Referral primary care provider”
- CD (Clinical Drug) [93,885 occurrences]  
Like BD terms, these terms often describe a quantity of some drug and may or may not occur in text.  
“Lavender Oil”  
“Hydrogen Peroxide Soln 3%”  
“Isopropyl Alcohol 99%”
- CP (ICPC component process (in original form)) [25 occurrences]  
“Administrative procedure”  
“Other therapeutic procedure”
- DS (Short form of descriptor) [509 occurrences]  
“AOD abuse”  
“biological AOD dependence”

- ES (Short form of entry “term”) [36 occurrences]  
“periodic light AOD use”  
“AOD tax”
- GO (Goal) [311 occurrences]  
Like orders (OR) below, the terms are full utterances.  
“Mobility, exercise, and activity will increase to optimal or return to baseline.”  
“Patient’s activity tolerance will increase or progress.”
- HD (Hierarchical descriptor) [59 occurrences]  
“Transplanted Organ Complication”  
“Neoplasm by Site”
- IS (Obsolete synthesized “term” in the Read Thesaurus) [3,781 occurrences]  
“Fall - accidental” (for concept “Accidental Falls”)  
“MVTA - Motor vehicle traffic accident” (for concept “Accidents, Traffic”)
- IX (Expanded forms of indicators (embedded abbreviations expanded)) [257 occurrences]  
“Systolic blood pressure”  
“Exercise stress test within normal limits”
- LPDN (LOINC parts display name) [97 occurrences]  
“Occupational Allergen Mix 2 (Acarus siro + Lepidoglyphus destructor + Gasterophilus intestinalis + Sitophilus granarius)”  
“Tree Allergen Mix 8 (Boxelder + Silver birch + Hazelnut + White oak + London plane/Maple leaf sycamore)”
- LS (Expanded system/sample type (The expanded version was created for the Metathesaurus and includes the full name of some abbreviations.)) [1,233 occurrences]  
About one-third of these terms contain embedded periods.  
“AORTIC VALVE”  
“AORTA.THORACIC.ASCENDING”
- MP (Preferred names of modifiers) [453 occurrences]  
“ABNORMALITY”  
“PROB”
- MT (An alternate form of a concept name from one of the source vocabularies created for the Metathesaurus) [104 occurrences]  
“coma”  
“incontinence of stool”
- MV (Multi-level procedure category) [404 occurrences]  
“Adenoidectomy without tonsillectomy”  
“Excision of semilunar cartilage of knee”

- NS (Short form of non-preferred “term”) [200 occurrences]  
“neonatal AOD abstinence syndrome”  
“dysfunctional AOD use”
- NX (Expanded form of non-preferred “term”) [200 occurrences]  
“neonatal Alcohol or Other Drugs abstinence syndrome”  
“dysfunctional Alcohol or Other Drugs use”
- OBD (Obsolete branded drug) [448 occurrences]  
“EC Naprosyn, 500 mg oral tablet”  
“Intralipid, 10% intravenous suspension”
- OC (Nursing outcomes) [193 occurrences]  
“Thermoregulation”  
“Decision Making”
- OCD (Obsolete clinical drug) [137,123 occurrences]  
“Adhesive Tape”  
“Glucose Oral Soln 50%”
- OL (Non-current Lower Level “Term”) [9,095 occurrences]  
“Anomaly anomaly congen”  
“Congenital anomaly, unspecified”
- OM (Obsolete modifiers in HCPCS) 2 occurrences]  
“SERVICE NOT COVERED BY MEDICARE”  
“PROCEDURE PERFORMED IN NON FEE SCHEDULE PLACE OF SERVICE”
- OP (Obsolete preferred “term”) [73,714 occurrences]  
“Carbenoxolone sodium [gastro-intestinal use]”  
“Acute abdomen”
- OR (Orders) [1,357 occurrences]  
All terms are from PCDS97 and are full utterances.  
“Discharge patient.”  
“Use assistive devices to maintain required position.”
- OSN (Official short name) [28,408 occurrences]  
“Calculus Analysis”  
“Drugs Ur Scn”  
“Amoxicillin MIC”
- PR (Name of a problem) [407 occurrences]  
“Placenta abruptio”  
“Dependency on alcohol”

- PTGB (British preferred term) [21,029 occurrences]  
“Abetalipoproteinaemia”  
“Acting out - mental defence mechanism”
- PX (Expanded preferred “terms” (pair with PS)) [4,600 occurrences]  
These terms often contain characters indicating a superscript or subscript.  
“Ca<sup>2+</sup>-transporting ATPase”  
“alpha<sup>1</sup> Antichymotrypsin”
- RHT (Root hierarchical term) [51 occurrences]  
“DSM-III-R”  
“MeSH”
- RPT (Root preferred term) [131 occurrences]  
“DSM-III-R”  
“MeSH”
- RSY (Root synonym) [36 occurrences]  
“Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-III-R”  
“LCSH”
- SA (Short forms of activities) [608 occurrences]  
“Adhere to agency protocol for donor screening and acceptance”  
“Administer agents to expand intravascular volume, as appropriate”
- SBD (Semantic branded drug) [14,365 occurrences]  
“Sodium Fluorescein 250 MG/ML Injectable Solution [AK-Fluor]”  
“Acetaminophen 250 MG / Caffeine 30 MG / Chlorpheniramine 2 MG / Hydrocodone 5 MG / Phenylephrine 10 MG Oral Tablet [Hycomine Compound]”
- SBDF (Semantic branded drug and form) [12,614 occurrences]  
“Furacin Topical Cream”  
“Dianeal Low Calcium with 1.5% Dextrose Intraperitoneal Solution”
- SC (Special Category term) [53 occurrences]  
“Congenital Malformations”  
“bandages”
- SCD (Semantic Clinical Drug) [27,314 occurrences]  
“calcium chloride, dihydration 0.2 MG/ML / Potassium Chloride 0.3 MG/ML / Sodium Chloride 6 MG/ML / Sodium Lactate 3.1 MG/ML Irrigation Solution”  
“Hydrogen Peroxide 300 MG/ML Topical Solution”
- SCDC (Semantic Drug Component) [21,702 occurrences]  
“Iron-Dextran Complex 100 MG/ML”  
“ALLERGENIC EXTRACT, DUST, AUTOGENOUS 1 UNT/ML”

- SCDF (Semantic clinical drug and form) [12,614 occurrences]  
“Triamcinolone Oral Paste”  
“Ephedrine / Phenobarbital / Potassium Iodide / Theophylline Oral Tablet”
- SD (CCS single-level diagnosis categories) [281 occurrences]  
“Abdominal pain”  
“Spontaneous abortion”
- SI (Name of a sign or symptom of a problem) [311 occurrences]  
“allergens”  
“anemia”
- SN (Official component synonym in LOINC) [319 occurrences]  
Most of these terms are abbreviatory.  
“ETOH”  
“O NOS AG”
- SP (CCS single-level procedure categories) [231 occurrences]  
“Diagnostic amniocentesis”  
“Abortion (termination of pregnancy)”
- SSN (Source short name, used in the UMLS Knowledge Source Server) [131 occurrences]  
“DSM-III-R”  
“MeSH”
- ST (Step) [132 occurrences]  
“Manage contracts”  
“Interview the patient or patient’s representative”
- SX (Mixed-case component synonym with expanded abbreviations) [453 occurrences]  
Like PX above, these terms contain special characters to indicate superscripts or subscripts.  
24,25-Dihydroxyvitamin D>3<  
Vitamin B>4<
- SYGB (British synonym) [6,758 occurrences]  
“Tumour of abdomen”  
“ABL - Abetalipoproteinaemia”
- TA (Task) [170 occurrences]  
“Introduce self to patient and explain services”  
“Determine patient’s primary spoken language and communications ability/limitations”
- TC (“Term” class) [61 occurrences]  
“GI\_NOS”  
“ABDOMEN”

- TG (Name of the target of an intervention) [63 occurrences]  
“Behavior modification”  
“Communication”
- TQ (Topical qualifier) [83 occurrences]  
The meaning of these terms is specific to MeSH indexing and may not be appropriate for general use, but they are not currently being excluded because the Medical Text Indexer (MTI) includes them in its recommendations.  
“abnormalities”  
“administration & dosage”
- TX (CCPSS synthesized problems for TC termgroup) [61 occurrences]  
“GI\_NOS PROBLEM”  
“ABDOMEN PROBLEM”
- VPT (Versioned preferred term) [128 occurrences]  
“Standard Product Nomenclature, 2003”  
“Medical Subject Headings, MSH2005\_2004\_10\_12”
- VSY (Versioned synonym) [24 occurrences]  
“LCSH, 1990”  
“Glossary of Methodologic Terms for Clinical Epidemiologic Studies of Human Disorders, 1992”
- XD (Expanded descriptor in AOD) [509 occurrences]  
“identification and screening for Alcohol or Other Drugs use”  
“Alcohol or Other Drug Disorder”

### 4.3 Good Types

This section contains the remaining types, i.e., those most appropriate for text processing.

- AC (Activities) [9,119 occurrences]  
“Monitor blood pressure”  
“Control bleeding”
- AD (Adjective) [879 occurrences]  
“Anorexic”  
“Scarred”
- AS (Attribute type synonym) [25 occurrences]  
“Precipitating factor”  
“Px - Prescription”
- AT (Attribute type) [819 occurrences]  
“Allergen”  
“Association”

- BN (Fully-specified drug brand name that can not be prescribed) [20,502 occurrences]  
“Parlodel”  
“Aminocaproic Acid”
- CE (Entry “term” to a Supplementary Chemical “term”) [234,137 occurrences]  
“2 bromolysergic acid diethylamide”  
“7S RNA”
- CL (Class) [14 occurrences]  
“Managing the Practice”  
“Ensuring Appropriate Pharmacotherapy”
- CMN (Common name) [5,713 occurrences]  
“acanthocephalans”  
“alfalfa”
- CN (LOINC official component name) [13,221 occurrences]  
“DIPALMITOYLPHOSPHATIDYLCHOLINE”  
“1,4-ALPHA GLUCAN BRANCHING ENZYME”  
“???LEAD” (*sic*)
- CU (Common usage) [10 occurrences]  
“Entelev”  
“Jim’s Juice”
- CX (Component process in ICPC with abbreviations expanded) [5,280 occurrences]  
“NOS ANTIBODY”  
“CANCER ANTIGEN 125”
- DE (Descriptor) [10,817 occurrences]  
“synthetic 11-hydroxycorticosteroids”  
“abdomen”
- DF (Dose Form) [798 occurrences]  
“24 Hour Transdermal Patch”  
“Aerosol”
- DI (Disease name) [6,172 occurrences]  
“ABETALIPOPROTEINEMIA”  
“ABORTION, SPONTANEOUS”
- DO (Domain) [4 occurrences]  
“Health Systems Management”  
“Ensuring Appropriate Therapy and Outcomes”

- DT (Definitional “term”, present in the Metathesaurus because of its connection to a Dorland’s definition or to a definition created especially for the Metathesaurus) [176 occurrences]  
“Acetylcholinesterase <1>  
“Animal”
- DX (Diagnosis) [182 occurrences]  
“Anxiety”  
“Blood Pressure Alteration”
- EN (MeSH nonprint entry “term”) [36,514 occurrences]  
“(131)I-Macroaggregated Albumin”  
“Injuries, Abdominal”
- EP (Entry “term”) [24,047 occurrences]  
“Dipalmitoyllecithin”  
“Branching Enzyme”
- EQ (Equivalent name) [2,312 occurrences]  
“Borrelia burgdorferi sensu stricto”  
“Flavibacterium”
- ET (Entry “term”) [51,391 occurrences]  
“MPTP”  
“Abelson’s virus”
- EX (Expanded form of entry “term”) [18,842 occurrences]  
“periodic light Alcohol or Other Drugs use”  
“Alcohol or Other Drugs tax”
- FBD (Foreign brand name) [13 occurrences]  
“Helixor”  
“Iscador”
- FI (Finding name) [5,016 occurrences]  
“ABDOMINAL PAIN, CRAMPY”  
“ABDOMINAL DISTENTION”
- GN (Generic drug name) [2,350 occurrences]  
“mesna”  
“paraaminobenzoic acid”
- GT (Glossary “term”) [4,797 occurrences]  
“SYNDROME ABDOMINAL ACUTE”  
“ABDOMINAL CRAMP”

- HC (Hierarchical class) [249 occurrences]
  - “Behavior Therapy”
  - “Cognitive Therapy”
- HG (High Level Group Term) [383 occurrences]
  - “Adrenal gland disorders”
  - “Benign neoplasms gastrointestinal”
- HT (Hierarchical term) [23,254 occurrences]
  - “Abdomen”
  - “Abdominal pain”
- ID (Nursing indicator) [2,576 occurrences]
  - “Ankylosed joints”
  - “Appetite loss”
- IN (Name for an ingredient) [19,578 occurrences]
  - “mesna”
  - “beta-Alanine”
- INP (Ingredient preparation) [4,231 occurrences]
  - “MESNA PREPARATION”
  - “PARA-AMINOBENZOIC ACID PREPARATION”
- IT (Index “term”, i.e., derived from the index to any non-MeSH source vocabulary) [2,077 occurrences]
  - “ACUTE ABDOMEN”
  - “CRAMP ABDOMINAL”
- IV (Intervention) [685 occurrences]
  - “Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)”
  - “Pain Management”
- LPN (LOINC parts name) [11,441 occurrences]
  - “DIPALMITOYLPHOSPHATIDYLCHOLINE”
  - “1,4-ALPHA GLUCAN BRANCHING ENZYME”
- LT (Lower Level “Term”) [53,283 occurrences]
  - “Acute abdomen”
  - “X-ray NOS abnormal”
- LV (Lexical variant) [10 occurrences]
  - “Hodgkin lymphoma”
  - “Hodgkins lymphoma”

- MD (CCS multi-level diagnosis categories) [693 occurrences]  
“Abdominal pain”  
“Congenital anomalies”
- MH (Main heading) [22,995 occurrences]  
“1,2-Dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine”  
“Abdomen”
- MOA (Mechanism of action) [256 occurrences]  
“Adrenergic alpha-Agonists”  
“Bile Acids”
- MS (Multum names of branded and generic supplies or supplements) [4,993 occurrences]  
“Acetone”  
“0.3cc Syringe 29g 1/2””
- N1 (Chemical Abstracts Service Type 1 name of a chemical) [22,810 occurrences]  
“1,4-alpha-D-Glucan:1,4-alpha-D-glucan 6-alpha-D-(1,4-alpha-D-glucano)-transferase”  
“1,1,3-Propanetricarboxylic acid, 3-amino-”
- NM (Supplementary chemical “term”, a name of a substance) [146,248 occurrences]  
“2-bromolysergic acid diethylamide”  
“3-hydroxyproline”
- NP (Non-preferred “term”) [5,437 occurrences]  
“3,4-methylenedioxyamphetamine”  
“congenital defects”
- OPS (Obsolete preferred term) [14 occurrences]  
“synaptonemal complex”  
“untranslated RNA”
- OPX (Obsolete preferred term, expanded) [14 occurrences]  
“synaptonemal complex location”  
“untranslated RNA location”
- OS (System-organ class in the WHO Adverse Reaction Terminology) [58 occurrences]  
“PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS”  
“AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM DISORDERS”
- PC (Preferred “trimmed term” in ICPC) [233 occurrences]  
“arthrogryposis multiplex congenita”  
“Bartter syndrome”

- PE (Physiologic effect) [1,699 occurrences]
  - “Vasoconstriction”
  - “Cardiac Rate Alteration”
- PK (Pharmacokinetics) [233 occurrences]
  - “Absorption”
  - “Glutathione s-transferases”
- PM (Machine permutation) [75,358 occurrences]
  - “1,2 Dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine”
  - “Enzyme, Branching”
- PN (Metathesaurus preferred name) [64,447 occurrences]
  - “17-Hydroxysteroid Dehydrogenases”
  - “Droxidopa”
- PQ (Qualifier for a problem) [9 occurrences]
  - “Family”
  - “Health Promotion”
- PSC (Protocol selection criteria) [567 occurrences]
  - “bladder cancer”
  - “basal cell carcinoma of the skin”
- PT (Designated preferred name) [941,672 occurrences]
  - “Dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine”
  - “Abdomen”
- RS (Extracted related names in SNOMED2) [68 occurrences]
  - “Aleutian disease virus”
  - “Aluminum silicate”
- RT (Designated related “term”) [6,324 occurrences]
  - “Lumpy jaw”
  - “20-Hydroxyprogesterone”
- SCN (Scientific name) [193,320 occurrences]
  - “Abelson murine leukemia virus”
  - “Absidia”
- SF (Synonym made by replacing “;” with no spaces around it with “,” in ICPCP) [5,985 occurrences]
  - “Cramps, abdominal”
  - “Loss (of) appetite”

- SS (Synonymous “short” forms) [329 occurrences]  
“Alzheimer disease”  
“adrenoleukodystrophy”
- SY (Designated synonym) [334,020 occurrences]  
“Branching enzyme”  
“Amylo-(1,4,6)-transglycosylase”
- VS (Value Set) [13 occurrences]  
“Report Priority Value Set”  
“Sex Value Set”
- XQ (Alternate name for a qualifier) [235 occurrences]  
These terms are similar to TQ terms, and the same comments apply.  
“anomalies”  
“teratology”

## 5. Syntactic Filtering

The final kind of filtering considered here is based on a high-level syntactic parse of the Metathesaurus strings. Since normal MetaMap processing involves mapping the simple noun phrases found in text, it is highly unlikely that a complex Metathesaurus string will be part of a good mapping. For example, the concept “Accident caused by caustic and corrosive substances” has high-level syntactic analysis [[head],[verb],[prep,head],[conj],[mod,head]] which contains seven syntactic units (head, verb, etc.) broken into five simple phrases ([head], [verb], etc.) Any text which resembles the concept will be broken up into several phrases each of which is processed separately. Thus, the text might map to constituent concepts (such as “Accident”); but the entire text will not map to the full concept. The strictest form of syntactic filtering, then, would be to filter out any string consisting of more than one simple phrase. However some tractable strings with more than one simple phrase are not filtered out. As of 1999, for example, *of strings* such as “Acute necrosis of liver” and “Radical resection of tumor of soft tissue of leg area”, which consist of a simple phrase followed by one or more *of* prepositional phrases, have not been excluded in syntactic filtering because of their tractability. In 2001 this condition was relaxed further to include phrases consisting of a simple phrase followed by any prepositional phrase followed by zero or more *of* prepositional phrases. An example of such a phrase is “Other operations on vessels of heart”.

## 6. Filtered Metathesaurus Models

The filtering described in the previous sections can be selectively applied to provide different views of the Metathesaurus. Three such models are

- **Strict Model:** All forms of filtering, manual, lexical, type-based and syntactic, are applied. This view is most appropriate for semantic processing where the highest level of accuracy is needed. The Strict Model consists of 1,428,084 (51%) of the 2,812,599 English Metathesaurus strings;
- **Moderate Model:** Manual, lexical and type-based filtering, but not syntactic filtering, are used. This view is appropriate for term processing where input text should not be divided into simple phrases but considered as a whole. The Moderate Model consists of 1,909,914 (68%) English Metathesaurus strings; and
- **Relaxed Model:** Only manual and lexical filtering are performed. This provides access to virtually all Metathesaurus strings and is appropriate for browsing. The Relaxed Model consists of 2,573,400 (91%) English Metathesaurus strings.