

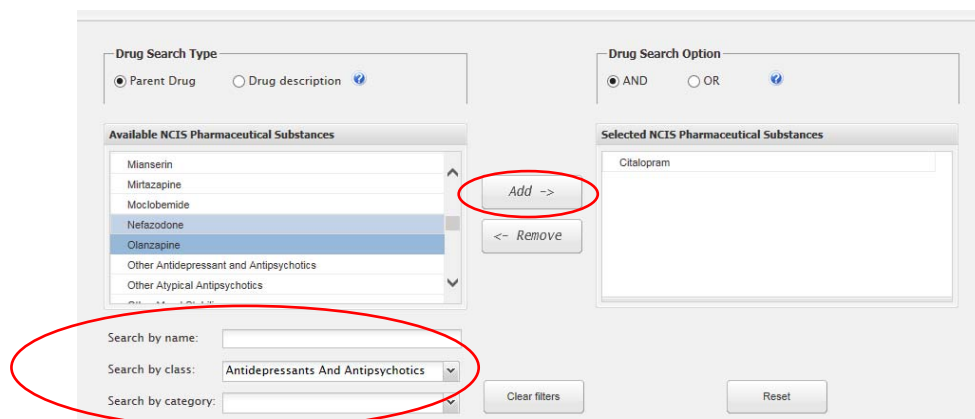
# Search Tips – Drug Involvement in Death

## How to search for the involvement of a particular drug

1. Select the Query Design screen from the NCIS Search menu.
2. On the fourth tab **4 - Mechanism/Object**, click on the drop down box for the Object or Substance Producing Injury – Category 1 field and select “Pharmaceutical Substance for Human Use”. An additional menu will appear below which will allow you to select the drug/s of interest.
3. Select a Drug Search Type from the radio buttons.

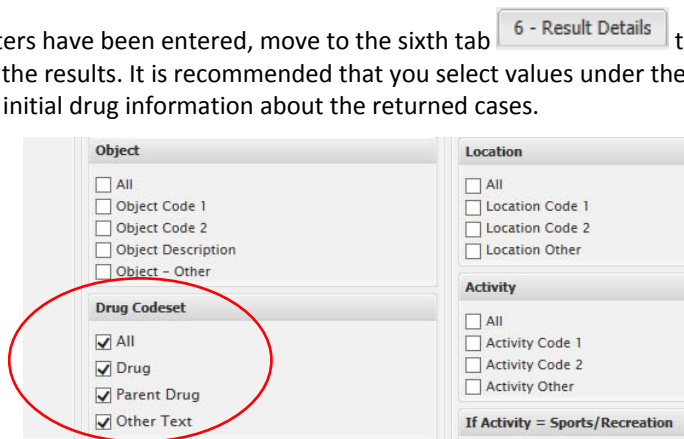


- Select the “Parent Drug” option unless you are searching for a particular metabolite. The parent drug option will present a list of drug names and exclude listing the various metabolites.
  - If you are searching for a particular metabolite, select the “Drug Description” option as it will list all drugs and metabolites,
  - *Note: If you select a drug from the “parent drug” listing, it will find all cases where that drug or its metabolites have been coded. It is therefore suggested most users should use the “Parent Drug” option as it is the simplest listing to navigate.*
4. Locate the drug/s you are interested in from the “Available NCIS Pharmaceutical Substances” list on the left of the screen. There are several ways to find a drug in the list:
    - a) Scroll through the list.
    - b) Type the drug name into the “Search by name” field.
    - c) Filter the list of substances that display by selecting a value from the “Search by Class” (e.g. Anti-depressants and Anti-psychotics) or “Search by Category” (e.g, Tricyclic Antidepressants) fields.



5. Once you have located a drug of interest, select it from the list box and click “Add” to move it into the Selected NCIS Pharmaceutical Substances box on the right of the screen.
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for all drugs that are to be included in the search
  - *Note: a maximum of 5 different substances can be searched upon at the one time.*

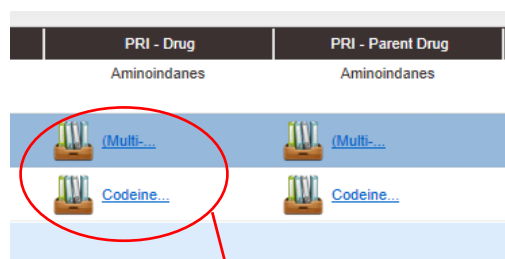
7. If you have more than one substance in the “Selected NCIS Pharmaceutical Substances” box, decide whether you would like to use the “AND” search operator or the “OR” operator for your search (the screen default is “AND”)
  - AND = Will return only cases where all selected substances appear in coding for the one case (I.e. a case would need to have heroin AND temazepam AND alcohol coded). This is a narrow, but highly specific search.
  - OR = Will return any cases where at least one of the selected substances appear in coding for the case. This is a broader, more encompassing search.
8. After selecting all drugs of interest, move to the other tabs of the Query Design screen and enter any additional parameters for your search (e.g. age ranges, date range reported, gender, intent of deceased or location type/boundary area etc.).
9. Once all search parameters have been entered, move to the sixth tab **6 - Result Details** to select the fields you want to see returned in the results. It is recommended that you select values under the Drug Codeset grouping, in order to obtain some initial drug information about the returned cases.



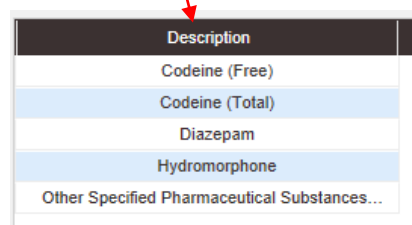
10. If you want the results returned to your screen, select the number of Results Per Page at the bottom of the screen, and click on “Search”. If you want the results to be unloaded to file, or set up as an automatic notification, select the appropriate check boxes near the top of the screen.



When results are returned to the screen, the Drug Codeset values will appear in columns along with any other requested fields. If multiple drug substances are coded for a case a link will appear in the relevant Drug Column.



Clicking the link will open a pop-up box which displays all substances coded for that field. From the screen display, you can choose to Export the Current Page results to CSV, XLS or PDF as per usual.



## Helpful Hints:

- It is currently not possible to search for all substances from a particular drug class or category (e.g. benzodiazepines) in the one search<sup>1</sup>. This is due to the need to limit the number of substances that are searched upon simultaneously in light of the compounding complexity applying an “AND” operator creates. If you require a search of all substances that belong to a particular class or category, please contact the NCIS in order to request a data extract be performed.
- Guidelines for how coronial staff are advised to code drug involvement on the NCIS can be accessed in the NCIS Coding Tips: Coding Alcohol and Drug Related Deaths. This background information may assist in understanding any limitations associated with drug coding, in what circumstances will drugs will be coded, and what drugs will be coded. The NCIS Coding Tips can be found on our website:  
<http://www.ncis.org.au/training-support/guidelines-for-coders>
- As part of coding practice in South Australia, coronial staff code licit or illicit substances (including alcohol) in the NCIS Mechanism/Object fields **only where such substances are specifically mentioned in the medical cause of death as outlined in the coronial finding**. This coding practice differs from that of other jurisdictions and therefore impacts upon cross-jurisdictional comparability of drug and alcohol involvement in coronial deaths on the NCIS.

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<sup>1</sup> The exception to this rule is when there are 5 or less substances in the grouping.