

Information for Authors

Focus and Scope

Aim and Scope of the Journal

The Journal of Public Health in Developing Countries (JPHDC) is a non-profit, peer-reviewed, open-access, international, scientific journal that publishes articles in all areas of public health. The journal has a special focus on the social determinants of health, the environmental, behavioural, and occupational correlates of health and disease, and the impact of health policies, practices and interventions on the community. JPHDC also publishes occasional special editions that concentrate on specific topics or events regarding public health.

The authors from the developing countries are particularly encouraged and are welcomed to contribute in this journal

JPHDC publishes:

Original research, Reviews, Technical notes, Study protocols, as well as a broad range of informal material in the form of Editorials, Correspondence, Opinion, Book reviews, and Comments on prior papers in the JPHDC.

JPHDC Subject Areas

JPHDC particularly welcomes research in the following areas (the list is neither exhaustive, nor rank-ordered):

- General Public Health
- Epidemiology of Non-communicable and Communicable Diseases
- Disease Prevention
- Public Health Genetics and Genetic Epidemiology
- Community Health Improvement and Prevention Programmes
- Hospital and Community Infection Prevention and Control, and Health Surveillance
- Population Healthcare Needs Assessment
- Health Intelligence
- Healthcare Commissioning
- Quality of Healthcare
- Population Health Inequalities
- Health Service Evaluation
- Environmental, Chemical, and Occupational Hazards in the Community
- Health Screening
- Health Education and Promotion
- Health Behavioural Changes and Risky Health Behaviours

Benefits of Publishing in JPHDC

The Journal of Public Health in Developing Countries (JPHDC) publishes high-quality, independently peer-reviewed research for the public health communities.

Faster publication online: JPHDC operates an online submission system for manuscripts, speeding up the submission and refereeing process. Our online system also allows authors to view online the status of submitted articles.

Quality and high standard of peer-review: JPHDC has a high standard of peer-review with strong Editorial Board who helps with policy and decision-making and in some cases with choosing referees and reviewing manuscripts.

Wide readership: JPHDC is available online adding speed and visibility to authors' research papers. Our open access policy ensures that anyone with online access can read your article.

Free e-mail alerts: JPHDC reaches a diverse range of scientific community who have signed up for free e-alerts of the table of contents of the journal, ensuring additional exposure for authors.

Authors retain copyright, licensing the article under a Creative Commons license: This means that articles can be freely redistributed and reused as long as the article is correctly attributed. For example, a published article can be posted on a personal or institutional homepage, emailed to friends and colleagues, printed and sent to people, included in course-packs, quoted in the press, translated and further distributed as often and widely as possible. Read our full Creative Commons License policy.

No space constraints: Publishing online means unlimited space for figures, and extensive data.

Promotion of your articles: Articles are widely promoted through email updates, table of contents, email alerts, and postings on JPHDC homepage - all resulting in increasing levels of access for each article. You can also promote your article via your own email lists, online links, listserves, distribution at conferences, and any other innovative techniques you wish to adopt.



Types of Articles accepted for Publication in JPHDC

Original Research Articles report on original primary research, but may report on systematic reviews of published research provided they adhere to the appropriate reporting guidelines as outlined in the policies section.

Brief Reports / Case Reports submitted to JPHDC should make a contribution to medical knowledge and must have educational value or highlight the need for a change in public health practice or diagnostic/prognostic approaches.

Review Articles undergo the same peer-review and editorial process as original research reports. They should be written for the general readership, not specialists. Consequently, they may include material that might be considered too introductory for specialists in the field being covered. They should describe and synthesize recent developments of interdisciplinary significance and highlight future directions.

Editorials usually provide commentary and analysis concerning an article in the issue of the JPHDC in which they appear. They may include one figure or a table. They are nearly always solicited, although unsolicited editorials may occasionally be considered. Editorials are limited to 750 words, with up to 10 references.

Study protocols help to improve the standard of medical research. Study protocol articles can be for proposed or ongoing prospective public health research, and should provide a detailed account of the hypothesis, rationale and methodology of the study. By publishing your protocol in JPHDC, it becomes a fully citable open-access article - freely and universally accessible online, permanently archived, with copyright resting with the authors.

Special Reports are miscellaneous articles of special interest to the medical community. They are limited to 2700 words.

Letters to the Editor provide a forum for readers to comment about articles recently published in the JPHDC, and they are also a place to publish concise articles, such as reports of novel ideas. Letters discussing a recent JPHDC article should be submitted within 4 weeks of the article's publication. Letters received after 4 weeks will rarely be considered. Letters should not exceed 450 words of text and 5 references, one of which should be to the recent JPHDC article. Letters being considered for publication ordinarily will be sent to the authors of the JPHDC article, who will be given the opportunity to reply. Letters will be published at the discretion of the editors and are subject to abridgement and editing for style and content.

Letter in Reply by authors should not exceed 500 words of text and 6 references. They should have no more than 3 authors.

Books Reviews *et al.* (up to 1000 words) presents reviews of current books, multimedia, and exhibitions, of interest to JPHDC readers.

Software articles should describe a tool likely to be of broad utility that represents a significant advance over previously published software (usually demonstrated by direct comparison with available related software).

Database articles should describe a novel biomedical database likely to be of broad utility. The database must be readily accessible and data within the database should be attributed to a source.

JPHDC has the policy of **publishing any scientifically sound article** in the field including articles that traditional journals may reject on the grounds of space or relevance to their readers. Examples include:

- Negative studies
- Studies that confirm previous work
- Studies with findings of regional interest
- Papers that include full experimental datasets
- Methodology papers

Theses and Grey Literature: We also encourage authors to publish their research already reported within Master or PhD theses or research published in the so-called "grey literature". However, we do not reprint such theses or reports as they always require considerable shortening and editing to meet the standards of international publications.

Publishing Your Manuscript in JPHDC

Editors of the JPHDC strive to provide authors with an outstandingly efficient, fair and thoughtful submission, peer-review and publishing experience. Authors can expect all manuscripts that are published to be scrutinised with the utmost professional rigour and care by expert referees who are selected by the editors for their ability to provide incisive and useful analysis. Editors strive to minimise the time taken to make decisions about publication while maintaining the highest possible quality of that decision. After review, editors work to increase a paper's readability, and thereby its audience, through advice and editing, so that all research is presented in a form that is both readable to those in the field and understandable to scientists outside the immediate discipline. Research is published online without delay.

Editorial Process

The following sections summarise the journals' editorial processes and describe how manuscripts are handled by editors between submission and publication. At all stages of the process, you can access the online submission system and find the status of your manuscript.

Initial submission

When you are ready to submit the paper, please use the online submission system for the journal. When the journal receives your manuscript, it will be assigned a number and an editor, who reads the paper, seeks informal advice from scientific advisors and editorial colleagues, and compares your submission to other

recently published papers in the field. If the paper seems novel, and the work described has both immediate and far-reaching implications, the editor will send it out for peer-review, usually to two or three independent specialists.

Peer-review

The corresponding author is notified by e-mail when an editor decides to send a paper for review. The editors choose referees for their independence, ability to evaluate the technical aspects of the paper fully and fairly, whether they are currently or recently assessing related submissions, and whether they can review the manuscript within the short time requested. You may suggest referees for your paper (including address details), so long as they are independent scientists. These suggestions are often helpful, although they are not always followed. Editors will honour your requests to exclude a limited number of named scientists as reviewers.

Decisions and revisions

When making a decision about publication in the light of reviewers' comments, editors consider not only how good the paper is now, but also how good it might become after revision. When all the reviewers' comments have been received, the editors discuss a manuscript among themselves and then write to the author(s). In this letter, the editor will either decline to publish your paper, or suggest that you revise it for resubmission, or offer to publish it without further revision. If the editor suggests revising your paper, he or she will provide specific suggestions, will state in the letter whether the revisions are major or minor, and whether further consultation with referees is likely when you resubmit the revised version. If the editor invites you to revise your manuscript, you should include with your resubmitted version a new cover letter that includes a point-by-point response to the reviewers' and editors' comments, including an explanation of how you have altered your manuscript in response to these, and an estimation of the length of the revised version with figures/tables.

Additional supplementary information is published with the online version of your paper if the editors and referees have judged that it is essential for the conclusions of the paper (for example, a large table of data or the derivation of a model) but of more specialist interest than the rest of the paper.

After acceptance

Your accepted manuscript is prepared for publication by copyeditors, who refine it so that the text and figures are readable and clear to those outside the immediate field; choose keywords to maximise visibility in online searches as well as suitable for indexing services; and ensure that the papers conform to house style. Many authors from around the world find that they need help in writing their manuscripts in English to a sufficient standard and style to be accepted into peer-reviewed journals. Referees also often request that manuscripts are rewritten before they are able to assess them in detail.

Researchers whose first language is not English often find it useful to either ask a colleague whose native language is English to review the manuscript before submission to the journal, or to use one of the many services that will, for a fee, edit papers to ensure the English is clear and well written.

JPHDC offers language editing services where we work with the authors to correct grammatical errors and other problems with the language of the manuscript. Copy-editing is provided after the typesetting (layout, structure, etc.) of the manuscript. It is our intention not to change the author's voice or style but to improve the readability of the manuscript. Copy-editing includes technical corrections of the following:

- Spelling
- Grammar
- Articles/Prepositions
- Punctuation
- Sentence Structure

Authors receive their typeset and copy-edited manuscript for proof-reading together with a highlighting of the major language changes. Please contact us at: Language@jphdc.org for details on charges for this service.

It is completely up to each individual author whether they want to use a language editing service, and if so which language editing service to use. Editorial decisions are made solely based upon the quality of the scientific content of the manuscript. However, poor and unclear language can obscure the scientific content of articles. If editors and/or referees cannot follow the rationale for a study this can lead to rejections of scientifically valid research. Using editing services can address these problems but does not guarantee acceptance.

After publication

All papers are published in a fully structured web version (HTML), and accompanying formatted PDF, in the online edition of the journal. Many linking and navigational services are provided with the online (HTML) version of all papers published by the JPHDC.

Disagreements with decisions

If the journal's editors are unable to offer publication of a manuscript and have not invited resubmission, you are strongly advised to submit your paper for publication elsewhere. However, if you believe that the editors or reviewers have misunderstood your paper, you may write to the editors, explaining the scientific reasons why you believe the decision was incorrect. Please bear in mind that editors prioritise newly submitted manuscripts and manuscripts where resubmission has been invited, so it can take several weeks before letters of disagreement can be answered. During this time, you must not submit your manuscript elsewhere. In the interests of publishing your results without unnecessary delay, we therefore advise you to submit your paper to another journal if it has been declined, rather than to spend time on corresponding further with the editors of the JPHDC.

Manuscript Submission Process

If you would like to submit an article to JPHDC, please register or login with your details on the manuscript tracking system.

Here are the steps of the submission process:

1. The Author establishes a JPHDC login account (if he/she doesn't already have one) and submits his/her paper through the online portal, in the accepted file format. Please refer to **Author Guidelines** for details.
2. The JPHDC server e-mails an automated notice to the Editor-in-Chief/Editor informing him/her of the submission and its location in the JPHDC web server.
3. The Editor views the submission and evaluates it for English comprehensibility and for compliance with basic JPHDC standards for formatting, length and style as outlined in the Author Guidelines. JPHDC Editor(s) will not put a paper into review if the English presentation is poorly comprehensible, the paper is incomplete or too lengthy, or the basic formatting is incorrect. Such a submission will be returned to the author without further review, and can be resubmitted once the basic pre-review problems have been addressed.
4. The Editor evaluates the subject matter of the submission and accordingly contacts potential reviewers based on his/her judgment of their expertise and skill in evaluating some or all of the content in the submission.
5. The Editor uses a portal in the JPHDC server to relay the submission to the Reviewers. If any Reviewer(s) decline to perform the review, alternates will be consulted until at least two Reviewers are set for the paper. Typically, a submission will have two to three Reviewers, but more may be recruited as appropriate for the material.
6. Each Reviewer independently evaluates the manuscript according to the criteria explicitly stated in the Review Guidelines, normally within two to three weeks.
7. Once the reviews are complete, the Editor returns reviews and comments electronically to Author (through the JPHDC interface) for revision of the manuscript, as necessary based on those recommendations and the Editor's judgment. In that message, the Editor will set a reasonable deadline for receiving the revised manuscript. If the reviews are generally favourable and include only minor suggestions, that deadline could be as short as 2 weeks. If major changes are required, it could be up to 1–2 months. Extensions to the Editor's deadline can be granted at the Editor's discretion to accommodate an author's circumstances. Failure to meet the deadline will result in the author having to submit the revised paper as a new submission.
8. The Author revises and submits the manuscript for second review using his/her JPHDC account.

9. If accepted, the Editor notifies the Author and Reviewers using the JPHDC interface, which sends e-mails as needed.
10. The accepted manuscript is prepared for publication by copyeditors, who refine it so that the text and figures are readable and clear to those outside the immediate field.
11. Cost to the author for an accepted manuscript is USD 300.
12. The accepted paper is uploaded to the server by an Editor after the galley proof has been approved by the author(s).

It is important to remember that the Editor, not the Reviewers, makes the final decision on the degree and nature of revision needed, and whether a paper ultimately is published. However, his/her responsibility as Editor is to consider the advice of the reviewers in making that decision. For details, please have a read of the 'Information for Reviewers' and 'Information for Editors' sections of the JPHDC website.



Guidelines for Authors

Instructions for New Submissions

See 'Journal Policies' section for information about policies and the refereeing process, available here: <http://www.jphdc.org/index.php/jphdc/about/editorialPolicies>.

JPHDC's Tips on Writing a Scientific Paper

To help the novice authors, the JPHDC has developed a list of suggestions on writing a scientific paper at: <http://www.jphdc.org/index.php/jphdc/pages/view/writingpaper>.

Submission process

Manuscripts must be submitted by one of the authors of the manuscript, and should not be submitted by anyone on their behalf. The submitting author takes responsibility for the article during submission and peer-review. To facilitate rapid publication and to minimise administrative costs, JPHDC only accepts manuscripts through its online submission portal. The submission process can be interrupted at any time; when users return to the site, they can carry on where they left off.

During submission you will be required to provide a cover letter. Use this to explain why your manuscript should be

published in the journal, to elaborate on any issues relating to our editorial policies in the 'About the JPHDC' page, and to declare any potential competing interests. Please have a look at a sample cover letter here: <http://jphdc.org/uploads/cover-letter-for-jphdc.docx>. You are also asked to provide the contact details (including email addresses) of potential peer-reviewers for your manuscript. These should be experts in their field, who will be able to provide an objective assessment of the manuscript. Any suggested peer-reviewers should not have published with any of the authors of the manuscript within the past five years, should not be current collaborators, and should not be members of the same research institution. Suggested reviewers will be considered alongside potential reviewers recommended by the Editorial team.

Manuscript Formatting

File formats

The following word processor file formats are acceptable for the main manuscript document:

- Microsoft word (DOC, DOCX)
- Rich text format (RTF)

Users of other word processing packages should save or convert their files to RTF before uploading. Many free tools are available which ease this process.

Preparing main manuscript text

General guidelines of the journal's style and language are given below. Manuscripts that grossly deviate from the format specified below will be returned to authors without review.

Style and language

Currently, JPHDC can only accept manuscripts written in English. Spelling should be US English or British English, but not a mixture. JPHDC will not extensively edit submitted manuscripts for style or language; reviewers may advise rejection of a manuscript if it is compromised by grammatical errors. Authors are advised to write clearly and simply, and to have their article checked by colleagues before submission. In-house copy-editing will be minimal. Non-native speakers of English may choose to make use of a copy-editing service.

Help and advice on scientific writing

American Scientist provides a list of resources for science writing at:

<http://www.americanscientist.org/issues/pub/the-science-of-scientific-writing>.

Typography

- Please use double line spacing.
- The manuscript should not include a running header or footer.
- The name of the author(s) should not appear on the manuscript anywhere but on the title page.
- For best conversion, we recommend use of Times New Roman (12-point) and Symbol fonts only.
- Leave 1-inch margins on all sides.

- Type the text unjustified, without hyphenating words at line breaks.
- Use hard returns only to end headings and paragraphs, not to rearrange lines.
- Capitalise only the first word, and proper nouns, in the title.
- All pages should be numbered.
- Please do not format the text in multiple columns.
- Greek and other special characters may be included. If you are unable to reproduce a particular special character, please type out the name of the symbol in full. Please ensure that all special characters used are embedded in the text, otherwise they will be lost during conversion to PDF.

Overview of manuscript sections

Manuscripts for Research articles submitted to JPHDC should be divided into the following sections (in this order):

- Title page
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results and discussion
- Conclusions
- List of abbreviations used (if any)
- Competing interests
- Authors' contributions
- Acknowledgements
- References
- Illustrations and figures (if any)
- Tables and captions
- Preparing additional files

Title page

The Title page (first page) should:

- Provide the title of the article
- List the full names, institutional addresses and email addresses for all authors
- Indicate the corresponding author and his/her preferred mailing address
- Provide word count for the manuscript - word count for the Abstract, and a separate word count for the text (excluding the abstract, acknowledgements, figure and table legends and references)
- Include the number of figures and tables, so that editorial staff and reviewers can check whether or not all figures and tables accompanying a manuscript have been included
- Have date of manuscript submission

Abbreviations within the manuscript title should be avoided. Titles should preferably be no more than 120 characters.

Abstract

- The Abstract of the manuscript should not exceed 350 words, should be citation-free, and must be structured into separate sections:

- **Background**, the context and purpose of the study; **Methods**, how the study was performed and statistical tests used; **Results**, the main findings; **Conclusions**, brief summary and potential implications.
- Please minimise the use of abbreviations and do not cite references in the abstract.
- **Trial registration**, if your research article reports the results of a controlled health care intervention, please list your trial registry, along with the unique identifying number (e.g. **Trial registration**: Current Controlled Trials ISRCTN12345678). Please note that there should be no space between the letters and numbers of your trial registration number. We recommend manuscripts to report randomised controlled trials in line with the CONSORT extension for abstracts (<http://www.consort-statement.org/index.aspx?o=1190>).

Abstracts for Meta-analyses

Manuscripts reporting the results of meta-analyses should include an abstract of no more than 350 words using the headings listed below. The text of the manuscript should also include a section describing the methods used for data sources, study selection, data extraction, and data synthesis. Each heading should be followed by a brief description:

- **Importance**: A sentence or two explaining the importance of the review question.
- **Objective**: State the precise primary objective of the review. Indicate whether the review emphasises factors such as cause, diagnosis, prognosis, therapy, or prevention and include information about the specific population, intervention, exposure, and tests or outcomes that are being reviewed.
- **Data Sources**: Succinctly summarise data sources, including years searched. The search should include the most current information possible, ideally with the search being conducted within several months before the date of manuscript submission. Potential sources include computerised databases and published indexes, registries, abstract booklets, conference proceedings, references identified from bibliographies of pertinent articles and books, experts or research institutions active in the field, and companies or manufacturers of tests or agents being reviewed. If a bibliographic database is used, state the exact indexing terms used for article retrieval, including any constraints (for example, English language or human study participants). If abstract space does not permit this level of detail, summarise sources in the abstract including databases and years searched, and place the remainder of the information in the Methods section.
- **Study Selection**: Describe inclusion and exclusion criteria used to select studies for detailed review from among studies identified as relevant to the topic. Details of selection should include particular populations, interventions, outcomes, or methodological designs. The

method used to apply these criteria should be specified (for example, blinded review, consensus, multiple reviewers). State the proportion of initially identified studies that met selection criteria.

- **Data Extraction and Synthesis**: Describe guidelines used for abstracting data and assessing data quality and validity (such as criteria for causal inference). The method by which the guidelines were applied should be stated (for example, independent extraction by multiple observers).
- **Main Outcome(s) and Measure(s)**: Indicate the primary study outcome(s) and measurement(s) as planned before data collection began. If the manuscript does not report the main planned outcomes of a study, this fact should be stated and the reason indicated. State clearly if the hypothesis being tested was formulated during or after data collection. Explain outcomes or measurement unfamiliar to a general public health readership.
- **Results**: State the main quantitative results of the review, including baseline characteristics and final included/analysed studies and/or sample(s). Include absolute risks whenever possible (such as increase/decrease or absolute differences between groups), along with confidence intervals (for example, 95%) or *P* values. Meta-analyses should state the major outcomes that were pooled and include odds ratios or effect sizes and, if possible, sensitivity analyses. Numerical results should be accompanied by confidence intervals, if applicable, and exact levels of statistical significance. Evaluations of screening and diagnostic tests should include sensitivity, specificity, likelihood ratios, receiver operating characteristic curves, and predictive values. Assessments of prognosis should summarise survival characteristics and related variables. Major identified sources of variation between studies should be stated, including differences in treatment protocols, co-interventions, confounders, outcome measures, length of follow-up, and dropout rates.
- **Conclusions and Relevance**: The conclusions and their applications should be clearly stated, limiting interpretation to the domain of the review.

Keywords

Three to ten keywords representing the main content of the article.

Introduction

The Introduction section should be written in a way that is accessible to researchers without specialist knowledge in that area and must clearly state - and, if helpful, illustrate - the background to the research and its aims. Reports of research should, where appropriate, include a summary of a search of the literature to indicate why this study was necessary and what it aimed to contribute to the field. The section should end with a brief statement of what is being reported in the article. Please give only strictly

pertinent references, and do not include data or conclusions from the work being reported.

In general, the introduction should address the following questions:

- What issue is being addressed in the research?
- Why is the issue important?
- How will the discipline of public health benefit from having addressed the issue?
- What have others done to address the issue?
- What remains to be done to address the issue?
- What will you do (i.e., what are your study's objectives)?

Methods

For both qualitative and quantitative research, the methods should be described in sufficient detail to permit readers to fully understand how the research was performed. The Methods section should include the design of the study, the setting, the type of participants or materials involved, a clear description of all interventions and comparisons, and the type of analysis used, including a power calculation if appropriate. Generic drug names should generally be used. When proprietary brands are used in research, include the brand names in parentheses in the Methods section. This section can be divided into subsections if several methods are described.

Selection and description of participants:

Describe your selection of the observational or experimental participants (including controls) clearly, including eligibility and exclusion criteria and a description of the source population. Because the relevance of such variables as age and sex to the object of research is not always clear, authors should explain their use when they are included in a study report; for example, authors should explain why only subjects of certain ages were included or why women were excluded. The guiding principle should be clarity about how and why a study was done in a particular way. When authors use variables such as race or ethnicity, they should define how they measured the variables and justify their relevance.

Technical information:

Identify the methods, apparatus (give the manufacturer's name, city and state or province in parentheses), and procedures in sufficient detail to allow other workers to reproduce the results. Give references to established methods, including statistical methods; provide references and brief descriptions for methods that have been published but are not well known; describe new or substantially modified methods, give reasons for using them, and evaluate their limitations. Identify precisely all drugs and chemicals used, including generic name(s), dose(s), and route(s) of administration. Authors submitting review manuscripts should include a section describing the methods used for locating, selecting, extracting and synthesising data.

Statistics:

Describe statistical methods with enough detail to enable a knowledgeable reader with access to the original data

to verify the reported results. When possible, quantify findings and present them with appropriate indicators of measurement error or uncertainty (such as confidence intervals). Avoid relying solely on statistical hypothesis testing, such as the use of *p* values, which fails to convey important information about effect size. References for the design of the study and statistical methods should be to standard works when possible (with pages stated). Define statistical terms, abbreviations and most symbols. Specify the computer software used.

Sponsor role:

Authors should describe the role of the study sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the report for publication. If the supporting source had no such involvement, the authors should state this. Authors should also state if the persons directly responsible for their work were able to access and independently analyze their data, and prepare and publish their manuscript without sponsor interference. Authors of studies funded by an agency with a proprietary or financial interest in the outcome should include and sign the following statement: "I had full access to all of the data in this study and I take complete responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis" (see Competing Interest policy).

Submission of Tools and Protocols:

Authors are encouraged to submit surveys, questionnaires or protocols used in their study for publication as part of their methods. We also encourage authors to publish original data/databases to encourage secondary analysis and ongoing debate.

Ethical approval:

For studies involving human participants a statement detailing ethical approval and consent should be included in the methods section. Further details on the journal's ethical guidelines are available at:

<http://www.jphdc.org/index.php/jphdc/about/editorialPolicies>.

Results

The Results section may be broken into subsections with short, informative headings. Present your results in logical sequence in the text, tables and illustrations, giving the main or most important findings first. Do not repeat in the text all the data in the tables or illustrations; emphasise or summarise only important observations. Extra or supplementary materials and technical detail can be placed in a linked appendix where it will be accessible but will not interrupt the flow of the text. When data are summarised in the Results section, give numeric results not only as derivatives (for example, percentages) but also as the absolute numbers from which the derivatives were calculated, and specify the statistical methods used to analyse them. Results of statistical analysis should include, where appropriate, relative and absolute risks or risk reductions, and confidence intervals. Restrict tables and figures to those needed to explain the argument of the paper and to assess its support. Do not duplicate data in graphs and tables. Avoid non-technical uses of technical terms in statistics, such as "random" (which implies a randomising device), "normal," "significant,"

"correlations," and "sample." Where scientifically appropriate, analyses of the data by variables such as age and sex should be included.

Discussion

The Discussion section may be broken into subsections with short, informative headings. Highlight the key findings and then emphasise the new and important aspects of the study (one paragraph). Do not repeat in detail data or other material given in the Introduction or the Results section. In the next paragraph, explore the possible mechanisms or explanations for these findings, compare and contrast the results with other relevant studies, thereby putting the results into a broader context (one to two paragraphs). Next, state the limitations and methodological weaknesses of the study (one paragraph), and in the concluding paragraph explore the implications of the findings for future research and for public health practice.

Conclusions

This should state clearly the main conclusions of the research and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance. Summary illustrations may be included. Link the conclusions with the goals of the study but avoid unqualified statements and conclusions not adequately supported by the data reported in the study. In particular, authors should avoid making statements on economic benefits and costs unless their manuscript includes the appropriate economic data and analyses.

List of abbreviations

If abbreviations are used in the text they should be defined in the text at first use, and a list of abbreviations can be provided, which should precede the competing interests and authors' contributions.

Competing interests

A competing interest exists when your interpretation of data or presentation of information may be influenced by your personal or financial relationship with other people or organisations. Authors must disclose any financial competing interests; they should also reveal any non-financial competing interests that may cause them embarrassment were they to become public after the publication of the manuscript.

Authors are required to complete a declaration of competing interests. All competing interests that are declared will be listed at the end of published articles. Where an author gives no competing interests, the listing will read 'The author(s) declare that they have no competing interests'. When completing your declaration, please consider the following questions:

Financial competing interests

- In the past five years have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future? Is such an organisation financing this manuscript (including the article-processing charge)? If so, please specify.

- Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future? If so, please specify.
- Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript? Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript? If so, please specify.
- Do you have any other financial competing interests? If so, please specify.

If you are unsure as to whether you, or one your co-authors, has a competing interest please discuss it with the editorial office.

Authors' contributions

In order to give appropriate credit to each author of a paper, the individual contributions of authors to the manuscript should be specified in this section. JPHDC adheres to International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' (ICMJE) Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts (http://www.icmje.org/urm_main.html). According to these requirements, an 'author' is generally considered to be someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to a published study. To qualify as an author one should 1) have made substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) have been involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) have given final approval of the version to be published. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group, alone, does not justify authorship.

Authororder® (<http://www.authororder.com>) is a free, easy-to-use tool to allocate author order. Determining who should be listed as an author of your article, and what order the names should be listed, can be a problem. Authororder® builds on internationally accepted protocols and is a simple tool that can be used by anyone to allocate author order.



Any change in authorship after submission must be approved in writing by all authors. We suggest the following kind of format (please use initials to refer to each author's contribution): AB carried out the data collection, and drafted the manuscript. CD carried out the literature search. FG participated in the design of the study, and performed the statistical analysis. KJ conceived of the study, and participated in its design and coordination and helped to draft the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support.

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The corresponding author is required to take responsibility for the appropriateness and accuracy of the manuscript's reference list. Improper citation can promote incorrect information, ignore alternative evidence and impair scientific progress. See [Fergusson \(2009\) \[http://ibmmyositis.com/Fergusson2009ongreenberg.pdf\]](http://ibmmyositis.com/Fergusson2009ongreenberg.pdf) for a complete discussion of the problems associated with poor referencing. [Fergusson D, Inappropriate referencing in research, BMJ 2009; 339: b2049].

- References should be formatted in accordance with the National Library of Medicine (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html), which includes details for all journal articles, group authorship, electronic-only publications, books, retracted articles etc.
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- Appendix material should not have separate reference sections. References that appear in both the text and the appendix should be numbered as they appear in the text. Any references that appear only in the appendix should be added consecutively to the end of the text reference list.

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- *Article within a journal* - Koonin EV, Altschul SF, Bork P. BRCA1 protein products: functional motifs. *Nat Genet* 1996;13:266-67.
- *Article within a journal supplement* - Orengo CA, Bray JE, Hubbard T, LoConte L, Sillitoe I. Analysis and assessment of ab initio three-dimensional prediction, secondary structure, and contacts prediction. *Proteins* 1999, 43(Suppl 3):149-70.
- *Article with Institutional author* - The Royal Marsden Hospital Bone-marrow Transplantation Team. Failure of syngeneic bone-marrow graft without preconditioning in post-hepatitis marrow aplasia. *Lancet* 1977;2:742-4.
- *No author given* - Coffee drinking and cancer of the pancreas [editorial]. *BMJ* 1981;283:628.
- *No issue or volume* - Danoeck K. Skiing in and through the history of medicine. *Nord Medicinhist Érsb* 1982:86-100.
- *In press article* - Kharitonov SA, Barnes PJ. Clinical aspects of exhaled nitric oxide. *Eur Respir J*, in press.
- *Published abstract* - Zvaifler NJ, Burger JA, Marinova-Mutafchieva L, Taylor P, Maini RN. Mesenchymal cells, stromal derived factor-1 and rheumatoid arthritis [abstract]. *Arthritis Rheum* 1999;42:s250.
- *Article containing retraction* - Shishido A. Retraction notice: Effect of platinum compounds on murine lymphocyte mitogenesis [Retraction of Alsabti EA, Ghalib ON, Salem MH. In: *Jpn J Med Sci Biol* 1979;32:53-65]. *Jpn J Med Sci Biol* 1980;33:235-7.
- *Article retracted* - Alsabti EA, Ghalib ON, Salem MH. Effect of platinum compounds on murine lymphocyte mitogenesis [Retracted by Shishido A. In: *Jpn J Med Sci Biol* 1980;33:235-7]. *Jpn J Med Sci Biol* 1979;32:53-65.
- *Article containing comment* - Piccoli A, Bossatti A. Early steroid therapy in IgA neuropathy: still an open question [comment]. *Nephron* 1989;51:289-91. Comment on: *Nephron* 1988;48:12-7.
- *Article commented on* - Kobayashi Y, Fujii K, Hiki Y, Tateno S, Kurokawa A, Kamivama M. Steroid therapy in IgA nephropathy: a retrospective study in heavy proteinuric cases [see comments]. *Nephron* 1988;48:12-7. Comment in: *Nephron* 1989;51:289-91.
- *Article with published erratum* - Schofield A. The CAGE questionnaire and psychological health [published erratum appears in *Br J Addict* 1989;84:701]. *Br J Addict* 1988;83:761-4.
- *Book chapter, or article within a book* - Schnepf E. From prey via endosymbiont to plastids: comparative studies in dinoflagellates. In *Origins of Plastids*. Volume 2. 2nd edition. Edited by Lewin RA. New York: Chapman and Hall; 1993:53-76.
- *Whole issue of journal* - Ponder B, Johnston S, Chodosh L (Eds). Innovative oncology. In *Breast Cancer Res* 1998, 10:1-72.
- *Article within conference proceedings* - Jones X. Zeolites and synthetic mechanisms. In *Proceedings of the First National Conference on Porous Sieves: 27-30 June 1996; Baltimore*. Edited by Smith Y. Stoneham: Butterworth-Heinemann; 1996:16-27.
- *Whole conference proceedings* - Vivian VL (Ed). Child abuse and neglect: a medical community response. *Proceedings of the First AMA National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect; 1984 Mar 30-31; Chicago*. Chicago: American Medical Association; 1985.
- *Complete book* - Margulis L. *Origin of Eukaryotic Cells*. New Haven: Yale University Press; 1970.
- *Monograph or book in a series* - Hunninghake GW, Gadek JE. The alveolar macrophage. In *Cultured Human Cells and Tissues*. Edited by Harris TJR. New York: Academic Press; 1995:54-6. [Stoner G (Series Editor): *Methods and Perspectives in Cell Biology*, vol 1.]
- *Book with institutional author* - Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification: *Annual Report*. London; 1999.
- *Scientific or technical report* - Akutsu T. Total heart replacement device. Bethesda (MD): National Institutes of Health, National Heart and Lung Institute; April 1974. Report No.: NIH-NHLI-69-2185-4.
- *PhD thesis* - Kohavi R. Wrappers for performance enhancement and oblivious decision graphs. *PhD thesis*. Stanford University, Computer Science Department; 1995.
- *Link / URL* - The Mouse Tumor Biology Database (Accessed 20 March 2012, at <http://tumor.informatics.jax.org/mtbwi/index.do>).
- *Link / URL with author(s)* - Corpas M. The Crowdfunding Genome Project: a personal genomics community with open source values (Accessed 20 March 2012, at <http://blogs.biomedcentral.com/bmcblog/2012/07/16/the-crowdfunding-genome-project-a-personal-genomics-community-with-open-source-values/>).
- *Dataset with persistent identifier* - Zheng LY, Guo XS, He B, Sun LJ, Peng Y, Dong SS. Genome data from sweet and grain sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*). *GigaScience* 2011 [<http://dx.doi.org/10.5524/100012>]
- *Clinical trial registration record with persistent identifier* - Mendelow AD. Surgical Trial in Lobar Intracerebral Haemorrhage. *Current Controlled Trials* 2006 [<http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN22153967>]
- *Patent* - Harred JF, Knight AR, McIntyre JS, inventors. Dow Chemical Company, assignee. *Epoxidation process*. US patent 3,654,317. 4 April 1972.

- *Newspaper article* - Rensberger B, Specter B. CFCs may be destroyed by natural process. *The Washington Post* 1989 Aug 7;Sect A:2(col 5).
- *Audiovisual* - AIDS epidemic: the physician's role [videorecording]. Cleveland (OH): *Academy of Medicine of Cleveland*, 1987.
- *Computer file* - Renal system [computer program]. MS-DOS version. *Edwardsville (KS): Medi-Sim*, 1988.
- *Map* - Scotland [topographic map]. Washington: *National Geographic Society (US)*, 1981.

Preparing illustrations and figures

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- Each table should be numbered and cited in sequence using Arabic numerals (i.e. Table 1, 2, 3 etc.).
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 - XLS, XLSX (Excel Spreadsheet)
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Statistical Methods

- The basis for these guidelines is described in Bailar JC III, Mosteller F. Guidelines for statistical reporting in articles for medical journals: amplifications and explanations. Ann Intern Med 1988; 108: 266-73.
- Exact methods should be used as extensively as possible in the analysis of categorical data. For analysis of measurements, nonparametric methods should be used to compare groups when the distribution of the dependent variable is not normal.
- Results should be presented with only as much precision as is of scientific value. For example, measures of association, such as odds ratios, should ordinarily be reported to two significant digits.
- Measures of uncertainty, such as confidence intervals, should be used consistently, including in figures that present aggregated results.
- Except when one-sided tests are required by study design, such as in non-inferiority trials, all reported *P* values should be two-sided. In general, *P* values larger than 0.01 should be reported to two decimal places, those between 0.01 and 0.001 to three decimal places; *P* values smaller than 0.001 should be reported as *P*<0.001. Notable exceptions to this policy include *P* values arising in the application of stopping rules to the analysis of clinical trials and genetic-screening studies.
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* for *P* <0.05, ** for *P* <0.01, and *** for *P* <0.001 with an explanation in the footnote if required. The body of the table should not include a column of *P* values.

Units of Measurements

Units of measurement should be presented simply and concisely using System International (SI) units.

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In addition to proper nouns, capitalisation of the first letter is applied for titles, section headings, figure and table legends but only for the first word. Abbreviations and expressions in the text such as Chap(s), Fig(s), Table(s), Sect(s), Paper, Theorem, etc. should always be capitalised when used with numbers, e.g., Fig. 3, Table 1, Paper III, Sect 2. The words figure(s), table(s), equation(s), theorem(s) in the text should not be capitalised when used without an accompanying number.

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