

## Preparing a Manuscript for Submission to the Journal of Reproduction & Infertility

### Aims & Scope

The Journal of Reproduction & Infertility is a peer-reviewed quarterly journal, published by Avicenna Research Institute affiliated to the Academic Center for Education, Culture & Research (ACECR). The Journal publishes original research articles, clinical trials, review articles, case reports, letters to the editor, editorials, commentaries, latest related news and views to help disseminate life science knowledge.

This Journal is devoted to the publication of all materials related to life sciences, domestically and internationally. Scientist at basic and clinical fields will find a place to voice their research and reach their colleagues to share their experience through this journal. Although, research articles on reproduction, fertility and infertility are the main focuses of this Journal, but a wide array of subjects are published, including research on reproductive gynecology, reproductive medicine, gynecologic oncology affecting fertility, reproductive endocrinology, reproductive physiology and pathology, andrology, prenatal diagnosis, preimplantation genetic diagnosis, sexually transmitted infections, reproductive law and bioethics, epidemiological and psychological studies concerning reproduction and infertility.

**Adopting Open Access Policy (OA):** This peer-reviewed Journal provides free, immediate, permanent, full-text, online access worldwide, to its digital scientific content, mainly research articles, but use of the articles or parts of them need proper referencing and citation.

### The Requirements for Submitting a Manuscript

The requirements for manuscripts submitted to the *Journal of Reproduction & Infertility* are based on the recommendations of the **International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)** which evolved from the Vancouver Group formed initially in 1978 and it is known as the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*. The Uniform Requirements state the ethical principles in the conduct and reporting of research and provide recommendations relating to specific elements of editing and writing. Editors and reviewers of this journal appreciate manuscripts that are easy to read and edit and more importantly are to the point and precise. The guidance that follows is largely based on *ICMJE's guidelines* and provides a general background and rationale for preparing manuscripts for the *Journal of Reproduction & Infertility*. We have tried to be in accordance with requirements for submission to the journal of ICMJE. Therefore we encourage authors to refer to the copy published by the organization at [www.ICMJE.org](http://www.ICMJE.org).

### General Rules Governing This Journal

- Articles from experimental and observational studies are usually written in sections with the headings **Introduction, Materials & Methods, Results, and Discussion**. Long articles may need subheadings within sections (especially the Methods and Results sections) to clarify their content. Other types of articles such as case reports, reviews, and editorials, need other formats. Seek a **pre-submission** checklist based on the type of your study and report its use and reference accordingly.
- The authors are advised to double space** all portions of the manuscript- including the title page, abstract, text, acknowledgements, references, tables, and legends- and margins

(Preferably four centimeters on all sides and only on one side of each page, in case print copies are submitted) which is necessary for reviewing and editing.

- Manuscripts are almost always submitted electronically to this journal. Please log onto <http://www.submit.jri.ir> for submitting your manuscript. Alternatively, the authors could contact the Editorial Office of the Journal at [journal@avicenna.ac.ir](mailto:journal@avicenna.ac.ir) for submission of manuscript by email.
- Authors are asked to number all the pages of the manuscript consecutively, beginning with the title page.

### 1- Cover letter

- A statement that the manuscript has been read and approved by all the authors
- That the requirements for authorship have been met for all the authors, based on the criteria stated by ICMJE
- Approval of all the authors regarding the order in which their names have appeared
- That each author believes that the manuscript represents honest work
- The name, address, and telephone number of the corresponding author, who is responsible for communicating with other authors about revisions and final approval
- The letter should give any additional information that may be helpful to the editor, such as the type or format of article. If the manuscript has been submitted previously to another journal, or in another language it is helpful to include the previous editor's and reviewers' comments with the submitted manuscript, along with the authors' responses to those comments. Submitting previous evaluatory correspondence for another journal accelerates the review process.
- Copies of any permission to reproduce published material, to use illustrations or tables or report information about identifiable people<sup>1</sup>
- Inclusion of the approval letter from the relevant Ethics Committee or Institution's Review Board, regarding the research protocol and the rights of the subjects, if applicable to the study
- A copy of the consent form, if applicable
- The letter denoting registration of RCTs in domestic or international databases

### 2- Title Page

The title page should have the following information:

- The title of the article. Concise titles are easier to read than long or complex ones. It should also include the study design especially for randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Authors should include all information in the title that will make electronic retrieval of the article both sensitive and specific.
- Authors' names, their highest academic degree(s)
- The name of the department(s) and institution(s) to which the work should be attributed e.g. a university, a research institute or a hospital.

<sup>1</sup> For the use of pictures, illustrations, diagrams, tables or any other media one should keep in mind that just downloading them from a site on the internet and even properly referencing them does not justify their proper use; as somebody else might have taken the material without permission and put it on his/her site you have downloaded from. This runs the risk for plagiarism. For further information refer to: *Commons: Photographs of identifiable people* at: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Photographs\\_of\\_identifiable\\_people](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Photographs_of_identifiable_people).

- Corresponding author: It should include full name, postal address, telephone and fax numbers for correspondence.
- Source(s) of support in the form of grant, equipment, drug, etc.
- Separate word counts for the main text (Excluding acknowledgments, figure legends, and references) and body of the abstract are necessary.
- The number of figures and tables.

### 3- Conflict of Interest Notification Page

Provide a notification page regarding potential conflict (s) of interest for authors. If this is not the case, state its absence.

### 4- Abstract

- Abstracts are usually indexed on databases and are frequently read. Therefore, abstracts should accurately reflect the content of the article and the body of abstracts (From Introduction to the end of Conclusion) **should not exceed 250 words** at most.
- The abstract should provide **Introduction**, the justification for doing the research and objectives of the study; **Materials & Methods** which includes the study subjects or lab animals, observational and analytical methods, significance level, statistical software and its version; **Results**, effect sizes and their statistical significance; and principal **Conclusion**.
- **Key Words:** To visualize your work internationally you are advised to provide 5 to 8 key words or short phrases that represent the main topic(s). It is highly recommended that terms be directly verified to exist on the NLM site under the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). The URL for the site to be used is: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/meshhome.html>

### 5- Introduction

The introduction should provide a background for the study (i.e., the features of the problem and its importance), clearly state the research objective(s) or the hypothesis tested by the study. The primary and secondary objectives should be made clear here. Give only strictly relevant references and do not include data or conclusions from the study.

### 6- Materials & Methods

The Materials and Methods section should include only information that was available at the time the plan or protocol for the study was written. It may also include:

- **Statement of the study's registration** at a domestic or international database for RCTs.
- **Selection and Description of Participants:** Describe clearly your selection criteria, if any, of the observational or experimental participants (cases or lab animals and the controls), including eligibility plus a description of the source population. Make sure to indicate the relevance of the inclusion or exclusion of variables such as age and sex to the objective of research as they are not always clear. Using variables such as race or ethnicity, you should define how you measure these variables and justify your use.
- **Technical information:** Indicate the methods, tools (plus the manufacturer's name and address in parentheses), and procedures in full detail for reproducibility. For established methods, reference to them, and give brief descriptions for published new methods or modified methods while including their limitations and justification for their use. Describe precisely all chemicals and medications used, including their generic names, doses and routes of administration. If you are

submitting a review, include a section describing the methods used for locating, selecting, extracting, and producing data. Summarize these pieces of information in the abstract, too.

- **Observance of Ethical Issues:** Aside from the inclusion in the cover letter, state in the Materials & Methods, the way of observance of ethical issues regarding Man or Animal that might be of concern to the readers of the journal, any legal body or the journal's authorities as this journal is in conformity with the Declaration of Helsinki.

**Declaration of Helsinki:** The *Declaration of Helsinki* was developed by the World Medical Association (WMA) as a statement of ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects, including research on identifiable human material and data. The declaration was first adopted by the 18th WMA General Assembly, Helsinki, Finland, June 1964, and amended by the 59th WMA General Assembly, Seoul, in October 2008. To get more insight about the principles, it is suggested to log onto: <http://www.wma.net/e/policy/b3.htm>.

- **Statistics:** Describe the statistical methods in a fashion to make it possible for a knowledgeable reader to validate the reported results when the data are available. Relying merely on hypothesis testing by using p-values, falls short to demonstrate the effect size properly. Mention the statistical software used for analysis and its version, if any. For selecting the design of the study and use of statistical methods, provide standard works and references. Define statistical terms, abbreviations, and most symbols.

### 7- Results

Results should be written in logical sequence in the text, tables, and illustrations, with **the main or most important findings first**. Report or summarize only important observations related to the objectives or secondary objectives of the study. Supply more information, if needed to be mentioned, in footnotes and or appendix. These could be easily published in electronic formats without any restriction. Give numeric results not only as percentages but also as numbers too and express the statistical methods used to analyze them. Restrict tables and figures to only explain the argument of the paper and to assess its support. Use graphs as an alternative to tables with many entries; do not duplicate data in graphs and tables and vice versa. Avoid non-technical usages of statistical terms (such as the word "normal", etc), adverbs of frequency (e.g. usually, etc), common words or phrases or vague words for describing subjects, etc (such as "a promising drug", "a devastating disease", etc) instead of numbers and percents.

### 8- Discussion

Stress the novel and important features of the study and the conclusions derived from them. Do not repeat the data or other material given in the Introduction, Materials & Methods or the Results sections. For experimental studies:

- Begin the discussion by summarizing the main findings,
- Show possible mechanism(s) or explanations for these findings,
- Compare and contrast the results with other studies,
- State the limitations of the study and finally,
- State the implications of the findings for future studies or for clinical practice.

Link the conclusions with the goals of the study but avoid statements and conclusions that are not adequately supported by your data. Avoid making statements (e.g. on financial

benefits or costs), unless your manuscript includes the appropriate and relevant data and analyses. Avoid claiming precedence in doing the intended research which almost always proves faulty and faces strong criticism, especially by foreign and domestic reviewers (e.g. This research is the first to establish a link ...), or referencing to work that has not been completed yet.

## 9- References

- Provide direct references to original research sources whenever possible, but avoid extensive references to the original work to save space in print formats. Small numbers of references to key original papers will often suffice, as well as more exhaustive lists, since electronic version of published papers are available too and can be referenced.
- Do not use abstracts as references.
- References to papers accepted but not yet published are possible if tagged "In press" or "Forthcoming", but obtain written permission for citing such papers as well as obtain verification that they have been accepted for publication.
- Minimize citation errors by double-checking references to the original article.
- You are responsible for checking that none of the references cited are retracted or drawn back articles (for articles published in MEDLINE indexed journals, PubMed is a perfect source for information on retractions).

### Reference Format

Referencing format of the *Journal of Reproduction & Infertility* is based on the American National Standards Institute style adapted by the NLM for its databases, as ICMJE refers to for this purpose. Therefore, authors are advised to consult *NLM's Citing Medicine* available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/bv.fcgi?rid=citmed.TOC&depth=2>.

A shorter version is also available at:

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform\\_requirements.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html).

Any other site providing **Vancouver style** is approved by this journal too.

**Journals:** Authors' last names and initials. (list all authors when six or fewer; when seven or more, list six and add et al). Title of article. Journal name. Year; Volume (number): Inclusive pages.

**Example:** Zarnani AH, Moazzeni SM, Shokri F, Salehnia M, Dokouhaki P, Ghods R, et al. Microenvironment of the fetomaternal interface protects the semiallogenic fetus through its immunomodulatory activity on dendritic cells. *Fertil Steril*. 2008;90(3):781-8.

**Books:** Authors' last names and initials. Book title. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication. Pagination.

**Example:** Eyre HJ, Lange DP, Morris LB. *Informed decisions: the complete book of cancer diagnosis, treatment, and recovery*. 2nd ed. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2002. 768 p.

**Parts of books:** Authors' last names and initials. Title of Book. Edition. Place of publication: publisher; Date. Number of part, Title of part; Location of part.

**Example:** Cunningham F.G, Leveno KJ, Bloom SL, Hauth JC, Hauth JC, Gilstrap III LC, et al. *Williams obstetrics*. 22nd ed. New York: Mc Graw-Hill; 2005. Chapter 6, parturition; p. 151-86.

- References should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they first appear in the text.
- Identify references in the text, tables, and legends by Arabic

numerals in parentheses.

- The titles of journals should be abbreviated according to the style used in Index Medicus or sought at PubMed Locator Plus.
- ISSN, the international identifier for serials, provides invaluable information at <http://www.issn.org/>.
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## 10- Tables

- Tables efficiently and precisely display pieces of information. To express the results and reduce the size of the text explaining them, use tables.
- Print each table on a separate sheet of paper.
- Number tables in the order of their first appearance in the text
- Write a short title for each one.
- Do not use internal vertical or horizontal lines.
- Include explanatory texts in footnotes, not in the heading.
- Nonstandard abbreviations should be explained beforehand.
- Symbols used for footnotes usually follow this sequence:  
\*, †, ‡, §, ||, ¶, \*\*, ††, ‡‡
- Include statistical measurements for variations, such as standard deviation and standard errors of the mean.
- Cite all tables in the text.
- Obtain written permission for using data from another published, in the press or unpublished source and properly acknowledge the use at the end of the paper.

**Table formats:** The table formats accepted by the journal include: PDF, MS Excel, MS Word and MS PowerPoint files.

## 11- Illustrations (Figures)

- Always include high quality electronic files of figures with 300dpi resolution. In addition the photographic prints you submit must be 10 MB in size.
- For all images, send large-sized sharp prints (color ones or black & white), usually 80×100mm. Letters, arrows, numbers, or signs and symbols on figures should be clear and in contrast with the background.
- Acknowledge the original source of photographs, tables or graphs AND submit written permission from the copyright holder for reproducing their material, except for documents in the public domain.
- Legends for Figures: Provide numbered legends for figures (double-spaced) on separate pages. Explain symbols, arrows, numbers, or letters on the illustrations clearly in the legend. Identify the scale you use to show the objects.

## 12- Units of Measurement

All measurements are reported in metric units (meter, kilogram, or liter) or their decimal in this journal, as are Temperatures stated in degrees centigrade. Report laboratory info or drug concentration in SI units.

## 13- Abbreviations and Symbols

Any use of standard abbreviations needs prior use of the word(s) and indication of the abbreviation or the acronyms in parentheses. Do not use abbreviations in the title.

#### 14- Acknowledgements

- At the acknowledgement section, name people for their contributions or their permission to reproduce their published material, to use their illustrations or report information about them- try to fully name people who have helped from the conception of the idea to adoption of the hypothesis, to finalization of the study, etc., earnestly.
- **Statement of the financial support:** Aside from the Title Page, state any financial or other relationships that might lead to a conflict of interest.

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