



Preparing a Manuscript for Submission to the Samoa Medical Journal

(based on the Guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)

General Principles

Manuscripts should be Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents. Do not use headers and footers, automatic referencing or footnotes and keep the layout of the file as simple as possible.

Double space all portions of the manuscript— including the title page, abstract, text, acknowledgments, references, individual tables, and legends—and leave generous margins.

Authors should number all of the pages of the manuscript consecutively, beginning with the title page, to facilitate the editorial process.

Reporting Guidelines

The general requirements listed in this section relate to reporting essential elements for all study designs. Authors are encouraged also to consult reporting guidelines relevant to their specific research design as per the table below.

Initiative	Type of study	Source
CONSORT	randomized controlled trials	http://www.consort-statement.org
STARD	studies of diagnostic accuracy	http://www.stard-statement.org
QUOROM	systematic reviews and meta-analyses	http://www.consortstatement.org/Initiatives/MOOSE/moose.pdf
STROBE	observational studies in epidemiology	http://www.strobe-statement.org
MOOSE	meta-analyses of observational studies in epidemiology	http://www.consortstatement.org/Initiatives/MOOSE/moose.pdf

Title Page

The title page should carry the following information:

Article title. Authors should include all information in the title that will make electronic retrieval of the article specific while being concise.

Type of Manuscript. i.e. Editorial, Research Article, Review Article, Case Study, For Debate, Historical Article, Letter

Authors' names and institutional affiliations.

The name of the department(s) and institution(s) to which the work should be attributed if required.

Contact information for corresponding author(s). The name, mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of the author responsible for correspondence about the manuscript. The corresponding author should indicate clearly whether his or her e-mail address can be published.

Source(s) of support in the form of grants, equipment, drugs, or all of these.

A brief working title, no more than 40 characters (including letters and spaces) at the foot of the title page.

Word counts. A word count for the text only (excluding Abstract, acknowledgments, figure legends, and references). A separate word count for the Abstract.

The number of figures and tables. It is difficult for editorial staff and reviewers to determine whether the figures and tables that should have accompanied a manuscript were actually included unless the numbers of figures and tables are noted on the title page.

Conflict of Interest Notification. To prevent the information on potential conflicts of interest from being overlooked or misplaced, it needs to be included.

Abstract

The abstract should provide the context or background for the study and should state the study's purpose, basic procedures (selection of study subjects or laboratory animals, observational and analytical methods), main findings (giving specific effect sizes and their statistical significance, if possible), and principal conclusions. It should emphasize new and important aspects of the study or observations.

Because abstracts are the only substantive portion of the article indexed in many electronic databases, and the only portion many readers read, authors need to be careful that they accurately reflect the content of the article. Include the trial registration number, if available, at the end of the abstract.

Introduction

Provide a context or background for the study (that is, the nature of the problem and its significance). State the specific purpose or research objective of, or hypothesis tested by, the study or observation. Both the main and secondary objectives should be clear, and any pre-specified subgroup analyses should be described. Provide only directly pertinent references, and do not include data or conclusions from the work being reported.

Methods

The Methods section should include only information that was available at the time the plan or protocol for the study was being written; all information obtained during the study belongs in the Results section.

Selection and Description of Participants

Describe your selection of the observational or experimental participants (patients or laboratory animals, including controls) clearly, including eligibility and exclusion criteria and a description of the source population.

Method

Identify the methods, apparatus (give the manufacturer's name and address in parentheses), and procedures in sufficient detail to allow others 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 the 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 synthesizing data. These methods should also be summarized in the abstract.

Results

Present your results in logical sequence in the text, tables, and illustrations, giving the main or most important findings first. Do not repeat all the data in the tables or illustrations in the text; emphasize or summarize only the most important observations.

When data are summarized 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 analyze them. Restrict tables and figures to those needed to explain the argument of the paper and to assess supporting data. Use graphs as an alternative to tables with many entries; do not duplicate data in graphs and tables. Avoid nontechnical uses of technical terms in statistics, such as "random" (which implies a randomizing device), "normal," "significant," "correlations," and "sample."

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

Discussion

Emphasize the new and important aspects of the study and the conclusions that follow from them. Do not repeat in detail data or other information given in the Introduction or the Results section. For experimental studies, it is useful to begin the discussion by summarizing briefly the main findings, then explore possible mechanisms or explanations for these findings, compare and contrast the results with other relevant studies, state the limitations of the study, and explore the implications of the findings for future research and for clinical practice.

Link the conclusions with the goals of the study but avoid unqualified statements and conclusions not adequately supported by the data. In particular, avoid making statements on economic benefits and costs unless the manuscript includes the appropriate economic data and analyses. Avoid claiming priority or alluding to work that has not been completed. State new hypotheses when warranted, but label them clearly as such.

References

Small numbers of references to key original papers are preferred to exhaustive lists.

Avoid using abstracts as references.

References to papers accepted but not yet published should be designated as “in press” or “forthcoming”; authors should obtain written permission to cite such papers as well as verification that they have been accepted for publication. Information from manuscripts submitted but not accepted should be cited in the text as “unpublished observations” with written permission from the source.

Avoid citing a “personal communication” unless it provides essential information not available from a public source, in which case the name of the person and date of communication should be cited in parentheses in the text.

Authors are responsible for checking that none of the references cite retracted articles except in the context of referring to the retraction.

Reference Style and Format

References should be written as per NLM’s publication ‘Citing Medicine’ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/bookshelf/br.fcgi?book=citmed> and numbered consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. Identify references in text, tables, and legends by superscript Arabic numerals and provide a numbered list of references.

Examples:

1. Meneton P, Jeunemaitre X, de Wardener HE. Links between dietary salt intake, renal salt handling, blood pressure, and cardiovascular diseases. *Physiol Rev.* 2005 Apr; 85(2): 679-715
(Article with Multiple Authors)
2. American Diabetes Association. Diabetes update. *Nursing.* 2003 Nov; Suppl: 19-20, 24.
(Article with Organization as Author)
3. Drug-resistance tuberculosis among the foreign-born in Canada. *Can Commun Dis Rep.* 2005 Feb 15; 31(4): 46-52. English, French.
(Article with No Author)
4. Bechade D, Desrame J, Raynaud JJ, Algayres JP. [Oesophageal ulcer associated with the use of bacampicillin]. *Presse Med.* 2005 Feb 26; 34(4): 299-300. French.
(Other than English)
5. Riffenburgh RH. *Statistics in medicine.* 2nd ed. Amsterdam(Netherlands): Elsevier Academic Press, c2006. Chapter 24, Regression and correlation methods; 447-86.
(Book Chapter)
6. Bruhat M, Silva Carvalho JL, Campo R, et al., editors. *Proceedings of the 10th Congress of the European Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy; 2001 Nov 22-24; Lisbon, Portugal. Bologna (Italy): Monduzzi Editore, International Proceedings Division; c2001. 474 p.*
(Conference Proceedings with more than 3 Editors)

The titles of journals should be abbreviated according to the style used in the list of Journals Indexed for MEDLINE.

Tables

Type or print each table with double spacing on a separate page. Number tables consecutively in the order of their first citation in the text and supply a brief title for each. Give each column a brief heading. Authors should place explanatory matter in footnotes, not in the heading. Explain all nonstandard abbreviations in footnotes using the following symbols, in sequence: *, †, ‡, §, ||, ¶, **, ††, ‡‡

Be sure that each table is cited in the text.

Illustrations (Figures)

Supply separate electronic files of figures (for example JPEG or GIF) that will produce high-quality online images in the journal; authors should review the images of such files on a computer screen before submitting them to be sure they meet their own quality standards. Titles and detailed explanations belong in the legends--not on the illustrations themselves.

Photomicrographs should have internal scale markers. Symbols, arrows, or letters used in photomicrographs should contrast with the background.

Photographs of potentially identifiable people must be accompanied by written permission to use the photograph.

Figures should be numbered consecutively according to the order in which they have been cited in the text. If a figure has been published previously, acknowledge the original source and submit written permission from the copyright holder to reproduce the figure. Permission is required irrespective of authorship or publisher except for documents in the public domain.

Legends for Illustrations (Figures)

Type the legends for illustrations using double spacing, starting on a separate page, with Arabic numerals corresponding to the illustrations. When symbols, arrows, numbers, or letters are used to identify parts of the illustrations, identify and explain each one clearly in the legend. Explain the internal scale and identify the method of staining in photomicrographs.

Units of Measurement

Measurements of length, height, weight, and volume should be reported in metric units (meter, kilogram, or liter) or their decimal multiples. Temperatures should be in degrees Celsius. Blood pressures should be in millimeters of mercury. Laboratory information (hematologic, clinical chemistry, and other measurements) should be reported in both local and International System of Units (SI).

Abbreviations and Symbols

Use only standard abbreviations. Avoid abbreviations in the title of the manuscript. The spelled-out abbreviation followed by the abbreviation in parenthesis should be used on first mention in the manuscript unless the abbreviation is a standard unit of measurement.