

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

The editors of the *American Journal of Critical Care (AJCC)* invite authors to submit original manuscripts describing investigations, advances, or observations from all specialties related to the care of critically and acutely ill patients. Papers promoting collaborative practice and research are encouraged. Manuscripts will be considered on the understanding that they have not been published elsewhere and have been submitted solely to *AJCC*. (This restriction does not apply to abstracts.)

Manuscripts should be submitted online via the *AJCC* online manuscript submission and review system at www.editorialmanager.com/ajcc. At the time of submission, complete contact information (postal address, e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers) for the corresponding author is required. First and last names, e-mail addresses, and institutional affiliations of all coauthors also are required. (Print copies of the journal will be sent only to those coauthors who provide their postal address.) Manuscripts submitted through the online system should not also be submitted by mail or e-mail. Manuscripts should be submitted in Microsoft Word, or a compatible format.

Each author should complete an “Authorship, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer, and Acknowledgment Form” and submit the completed form by fax or e-mail as a PDF attachment.

Quality improvement studies help maximize the integrity and safety of critical care. *AJCC* welcomes such articles. However, due to their subjective relationship to context and social processes, such articles are difficult to evaluate using traditional empirical standards. For this reason, *AJCC* asks that quality improvement studies adhere to the Standards for Quality Improvement Reporting Excellence (SQUIRE) Guidelines. For more information about SQUIRE, please see http://qshc.bmj.com/content/vol17/Suppl_1 or doi:10.1136/qshc.2008.029058.

Editorial Office Contact Information

AJCC Editorial Office, Attn.: Peer Review Coordinator, phone, (949) 448-7340 or (800) 394-5995, ext 242; fax, (949) 448-6633; e-mail, ajcc.editorialoffice@aacn.org.

For help submitting your manuscript online, visit www.editorialmanager.com/ajcc and click “Author Tutorial.” For technical help or questions not addressed by the Author Tutorial document, e-mail ajcchelp@aacn.org.

AJCC cannot accept responsibility for lost or mislaid manuscripts; please keep a copy for your files. The following types of manuscripts are published in *AJCC*:

- Research articles (1500-3000 words; preference is no more than 3 tables and 3 figures)
- Review articles (1500-3000 words)
- Brief reports (750-1200 words; limit to 1 table and 1 figure)
- Case reports (500-1500 words; no more than 1 table and 1 figure)
- Letters (250-500 words)
- Guest editorials (500-1000 words)
- Commentaries (500-1000 words)

Peer Review—All submissions are subject to peer review. **To ensure a blinded review, do not include the author’s name or institution in the running head or anywhere in the manuscript after the title page. This includes references in the first person to the author’s own work. Manuscripts that do not meet this requirement will not be reviewed.** Two or more authorities will judge the validity, originality, and significance of the work presented. This process takes roughly 3 months, but delays are sometimes unavoidable. After the manuscript has been reviewed, the author will be informed whether the manuscript has been accepted or rejected, or requires revision before publication.

Accepted manuscripts become the property of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) and may not be published without the written permission of AACN. Accepted manuscripts are subject to editing to conform to the *American Medical Association Manual of Style*, 10th edition (2007). Authors will be asked to review galley proofs and PDFs of page proofs prior to publication.

Manuscript Content—Manuscript content should be laid out in accordance with the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals (*N Engl J Med*. 1991;324:424-428).

Authorship, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer, and Acknowledgment Form—Please include a cover letter with the *AJCC* Authorship, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer, and Acknowledgment Form, **signed and dated by each author**. Be sure to **fill in the title of your manuscript** on the Authorship, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer, and Acknowledgment Form (see below). All financial disclosures—including disclosures of no financial conflicts—will be published.

Title Page: This is page 1, should occupy only 1 page, and should contain the following:

- **Title** (should be concise yet informative)
- **Running title** (usually 2 to 5 words)
- **The authors’ full names in preferred publishing order, with degrees, credentials, ranks, and affiliations**
 - **The name, address, e-mail address, and telephone (home and office) and fax numbers of the author to whom all correspondence and reprint requests should be addressed**

- **The institution(s) at which the work was performed**
- **Key words consistent with those found in the most recently published CINAHL Subject Heading List**
- **Grant or other financial support used in the study**

Brief Report—Short reports of original studies, evaluations, and pilot data should be submitted as brief reports of 750 to 1200 words (not including abstract, table, figure, references, and any online-only material). An abstract is required. A structured abstract is recommended, but an unstructured abstract will be accepted. Please include no more than 1 table and 1 figure.

Abstract—Abstract format varies as follows:

Clinical and basic research studies—must have structured abstracts of no more than 250 words (Haynes RB, Mulrow CD, Huth EJ, Altman DG, Gardner MJ. More informative abstracts revisited. *Ann Intern Med.* 1990;113:69-76). Abstracts must be written in the 3rd person. Abstracts for clinical studies should have the following subheadings: Background, Objectives, Methods, Results, Conclusions.

Laboratory studies and new apparatuses and techniques—a shorter form is requested (Relman AS. New “information for authors”—and readers. *N Engl J Med.* 1990;323:356). These abstracts should have the following subheadings: Background, Methods, Results, Conclusions.

Review articles and brief reports—abstracts need not be structured.

Case reports—an unstructured abstract of no more than 150 words is required.

Ethics—When human experimentation is being reported, a statement must be included confirming that the work was done in accordance with the appropriate institutional review body and carried out with the ethical standards set forth in the Helsinki Declaration of 1975. When laboratory animals are used, provide a statement that the work was carried out according to the National Research Council’s protocol for, or any national law on, the care and use of laboratory animals.

Releases—If any material in the manuscript is from a prior copyrighted publication, the manuscript **must be accompanied by a letter of permission from the copyright holder**. However, **we prefer not to publish** figures that have been published elsewhere. If applicable, permission to use unpublished data and personal communications must be included.

Patient Descriptions, Photographs, and Pedigrees—Include a signed statement of informed consent to publish (in print and online) patient descriptions, photographs, and pedigrees from all persons (parents or legal guardians for

minors) who can be identified in such written descriptions, photographs, or pedigrees. Such persons should be shown the manuscript before its submission.

References—These should start on a separate page following the text. They must be numbered consecutively by their order of appearance in the text. References cited in figures and tables must be numbered sequentially as if they are cited where the figure or title is first cited in the text. In the text, designate reference numbers either as superscripts or on the line in parentheses. *Do not use a word processor’s footnote or endnote function*. Check all references for accuracy and completeness. Abbreviate journal titles as found in *Index Medicus*. If in doubt as to the correct abbreviation, cite the complete journal name. Do not use periods in abbreviations of journal titles. List all authors, but if the number exceeds 6, list only the first 3 authors followed by the phrase “et al.” Please follow the format and punctuation shown in the following examples:

Journal Articles

Last name and initials (no periods) of authors, title of article (capitalize only the first word, proper names, and abbreviations normally capitalized; no quotation marks), journal title (italicize and use *Index Medicus* abbreviations), year of publication, volume, inclusive page numbers.

Example:

Pun BT, Gordon SM, Peterson JF, et al. Large-scale implementation of sedation and delirium monitoring in the intensive care unit: a report from two medical centers. *Crit Care Med.* 2005;33(6):1199-1205.

Books

Last name and initials of authors; title of book (italicize and capitalize all significant words); edition number (if after first edition); last name and initials of editor if any; city and state of publication; publisher; year of publication; page numbers (only if specifically cited).

Example:

Munhall PL, Boyd CO. *Nursing Research: A Qualitative Perspective*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: National League for Nursing; 1998.

Book Chapters

Last name and initials of authors; title of chapter; “In:” followed by last name and initials of editors, “ed.”; title of book, etc, as above.

Example:

Lewinsohn P. Depression in adolescents. In: Gottlib IH, Hammen CL, eds. *Handbook of Depression*. New York, NY: Guilford Press; 2002:541-553.

Online References

Author(s), if given; title of the specific item cited (if none is given, use the name of the organization responsible for the

site); name of the Web site; full URL; published (date); date the Web site was accessed.

Example:

International Society for Infectious Diseases. ProMED-mail Web site. <http://www.promedmail.org>. Accessed April 29, 2006.

Drug Names—Use complete generic names only. The trade name of a particular drug may be cited in parentheses the first time the generic name appears.

Units of Measurement—Physiologic measurements should be reported in metric units (International System of Units, SI); conventional units may be placed in parentheses after the SI units. Use metric units or decimal multiples for length, height, weight, and volume. Show temperature in degrees Celsius, blood pressure in millimeters of mercury, and volume (liquid and gas) in milliliters, not cubic centimeters. Laboratory values may be reported in conventional units.

Abbreviations and Symbols—Avoid nonstandard abbreviations. Use the full term for an abbreviation or symbol on first reference, unless it is a standard unit of measure.

Letters—Letters to the editors raising points of current interest or commenting on articles published in the journal are welcome. The editors reserve the right to accept, reject, or excerpt letters without changing the views expressed by the writer. The author of an original article often is given the opportunity to respond to published comments. Letters should be sent via e-mail (ajcc@aacn.org). Electronic letters (eLetters) can be sent to the editors by clicking “Respond to This Article” on either the full-text or PDF view of each article on the *AJCC* Web site, www.ajcconline.org.

Figures and Tables—Accepted manuscripts must be submitted with artwork (figures and photographs) in a high-resolution format (300 dpi or above). We cannot use artwork that is embedded in PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, or Excel files. For printing purposes, the original art that was placed into these applications is required. Figures such as graphs and data points should be provided in the file along with the other parts of the manuscript (as a Microsoft Word text file). Do not submit files downloaded from the Internet; these are low resolution and reproduce poorly. Preferred file formats are TIFF and EPS. Although JPG and BMP are acceptable, these formats are not the best to use, as they are low resolution. Photographs in which the patient could be recognized must be accompanied by a statement signed by the patient or patient’s guardian granting permission to publish the photograph for educational purposes. If permission is not obtained, the photograph will be omitted or cropped to ensure that the patient’s identity is not disclosed.

Legends for Illustrations—Figure legends should begin on a new manuscript page, after the tables. They should be

inserted in consecutive order.

Tables—Each table must be numbered (consecutively in the order mentioned in the text) and titled. Each column within a table should have a heading. Abbreviations must be explained in a footnote. Please do not place more than 1 table on a page.

CHECKLIST FOR AUTHORS

- Cover letter (include name, home and work addresses, home and work telephone numbers, fax number, and e-mail addresses of corresponding author) with Authorship, Financial Disclosure, Copyright Transfer, and Acknowledgment Form signed by *each* author. (The form is available online at <http://ajcc.aacnjournals.org/misc/ifora.shtml#authorship>.) Manuscripts should be submitted online via Editorial Manager, the *AJCC* online manuscript submission and review system, at www.editorialmanager.com/ajcc. Editorial Manager will combine your submission into a single PDF file for purposes of blinded peer review, but the manuscript you submit online should contain the following components:
- Title page (double-spaced) includes:
 - Title of manuscript
 - Running title
 - Name, professional credentials, institutional or academic affiliation(s), city and state of all authors in the order intended for publication
 - Name, address, e-mail address, and telephone (home and work) and fax numbers of author to whom correspondence should be addressed
 - Institution(s) at which the work was performed
 - Grant or other financial support used for the study
 - Key words for indexing: 3 to 5 CINAHL search terms
- Text of manuscript (number as page 1; double-spaced; *do not* include authors’ names or institutions in the running head or in the manuscript)
- Summary of Key Points and/or bulleted list of practical bedside clinical applications of research findings (4 to 6 items with 2 to 3 sentences serving as introduction) for use on Clinical Pearls page (include as numbered page; double-spaced on a separate page within the same document file as the manuscript text)
- References (include as numbered pages; double-spaced on separate pages within the same document file as the manuscript text; follow reference style described in guidelines)
- Acknowledgments, disclaimers, sources of financial support (or claim of no conflict of interest; double-spaced)
- Tables (double-spaced, 1 per page; numbered consecutively; include title for each), figures, and legends embedded with manuscript for first submission; separated if manuscript accepted. Authors are encouraged to limit the numbers of tables and figures to those necessary for delivery of key information
- Permissions to publish identifiable persons in photographs, copyrighted materials, and any material not belonging to the author.