

Manuscript Submission Guidelines and Policies for *Medical Acupuncture*

Last updated 7/20/2022 12:49:44 PM

Journal Information

- **Manuscript Submission Site:** <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/acupuncture>
- Editorial Office Contact: yaelbenporat@me.com
- Support Contact: prosupport@liebertpub.com
- Journal Model: Hybrid (Open Access option)
- Blinding: Single Blind
- File formatting requirement stage: Upon submission
- Instant Online Option (immediate publication of accepted version): No
- Submission Fee: None
- Average days to initial decision: 27 days

About the Journal

Medical Acupuncture is a journal with an international scope, focusing on the evolving specialty of medical acupuncture. The editor welcomes articles on all aspects of medical acupuncture, including research, education, clinical practice, technology, policy, ethics, law, schools of thought, history, and related disciplines.

Manuscript Types and Guidelines

All manuscripts must adhere to the [Standards for Reporting Interventions in Controlled Trials of Acupuncture \(STRICTA\) 2010 requirements](#).

Original Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000-word limit • Structured abstract of no more than 250 words • Maximum of eight (8) figures and/or tables • Reporting requirements: STRICTA
Review Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000-word limit • Structured abstract of no more than 250 words • Maximum of eight (8) figures and/or tables
Case Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,500-word limit • Structured abstract of no more than 250 words • Maximum of four (4) figures and/or tables • Maximum of 25 references
Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,500-word limit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstructured abstract of no more than 250 words that summarizes the objective, main points, and conclusions of the article. • Maximum total of three (3) figures and/or tables • Maximum of 25 references
Editorials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000-word limit • No abstract • No figures or tables • Maximum of 10 references
Commentaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000-word limit • No abstract • No figures or tables • Maximum of 10 references
Letters to the Editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500-word limit • No abstract • May include one figure OR table • Reference citations are identical in style to those of full original articles, but should not exceed five (5).

Word limits do NOT pertain to the abstract, disclosure statements, author contribution statements, funding information, acknowledgments, tables, figure legends, or references.

References

Medical Acupuncture uses Mary Ann Liebert's **Vancouver** reference format. Templates are available in [Zotero](#) and through the CSL Style Repository. An [Endnote template](#) is also available.

Liebert Vancouver Style: Order of Citation

- Reference List: Prepared in sequential order as cited in text.
- In-text Citations: All references must be cited in text in numerical order, set in superscript Arabic numerals outside of any punctuation. Do not set reference numbers in parentheses or brackets. To cite several references at once, use commas to separate non-sequential citations and use dashes to separate sequential citations; do not include spaces. Ex: 3,7,12–15
- Journal titles should follow the abbreviation style of PubMed/Medline.
- Include among the references any articles that have been accepted but have not yet published; identify the name of publication and add "In Press." If the reference has been published online, provide the DOI number in place of the page range.

Style Examples for Reference List:

Type of Reference	Punctuation and Order of Elements in Reference List
Journal article with 1-3 authors	Wang Q, Nambiar K, Wilson JM. Isolating natural adeno-associated viruses from primate tissues with a high-fidelity polymerase. Hum Gene Ther 2021;32(23-24):1439-1449; doi: 10.1089/hum.2021.055 [insert article-specific DOI if available].
Journal article with more than 3	Pfister EL, DiNardo N, Mondo E, et al. Artificial miRNAs reduce human mutant Huntington throughout the striatum in a transgenic sheep model of Huntington's disease. Hum Gene Ther

authors	2018;29(6):663–673; doi: 10.1089/hum.2017.199 [insert article-specific DOI if available].
Edited Book	Herzog RW, Zolotukhin S, (eds). A Guide to Human Gene Therapy. World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.: Singapore; 2010.
Chapter in an Edited Book	Nicklin SA, Baker AH. Adenoviral Vectors. In: A Guide to Human Gene Therapy. (Herzog RW, Zolotukhin S. eds.) World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.: Singapore; 2010; pp. 21-36.
Authored Book	Isaacson W. The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race. Simon & Schuster: New York, NY; 2021.
Website	Last name, first/middle initial(s) of author(s) [if available]. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. What is Gene Therapy? Silver Spring, MD; 2018. Available from: https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/cellular-gene-therapy-products/what-gene-therapy . [Last accessed: month/date/year].
Personal communications	References that are unpublished (ie: personal communications, emails, letters) are not to be included in the reference list. Instead, insert “Personal communication; [name], date” parenthetically at the point of citation within text.
Using previously published images or tables as a reference	Reused/adapted images, tables, or any published material must be officially cited as a reference in the reference list, and the author(s) of the submitted work must obtain written permission from the copyright holder. Verbal approvals are not acceptable. Any fees associated with the reuse or adaptation of any material is the sole responsibility of the author(s).

Other

Manuscript Title

The **STRICTA 2010 guidelines** require that you identify the type of trial (i.e., “Acupuncture for Hiccups in the Elderly Adult: A Randomized Trial”; “Acupuncture Used to Stop Smoking: An Observational Trial.”)

Manuscript Text

In general, the text should be organized under the headings: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, and Conclusions. Refer to the detailed guidelines below.

Introduction

Refer to Table 2/2ab **STRICTA 2010**. Provide a brief background for the article, including the rationale and hypotheses for the study or observation. Do not present data from the current work.

Methods

The following should be taken into account:

1. Provide rationale for treatment, and the style of acupuncture used.

2. Supply needling details: unilateral/bilateral points employed.
3. Number of needles inserted; needle type (gauge, length, manufacturer [include city, state, and country]); insertion depth; responses elicited (Qi); and whether twirled counterclockwise or clockwise.
4. Electrostimulator device (type, model, manufacturer [include city, state, and country]); time; stimulation frequency; which leads are designated negative and positive and where placed.
5. State treatment regimen: number of treatments, frequency (treatments per week, etc.); interventions employed such as moxibustion, cupping, herbs, etc.; treatment duration; environment: music, lighting, aromatics, etc.

Describe the selection of subjects, including demographics and study design. Describe the location and dates of the study. Identify the procedures in sufficient detail so others may replicate the results. Provide references to established methods and new techniques; provide the rationale for their use and also describe their limitations. Authors submitting review articles should describe the methods used to locate, select, extract, and synthesize data.

The principal author must state that verbal or written consent was obtained from the patient(s) when appropriate. The principal author must state whether a human research committee granted approval for treating and obtaining data or employing protocols that involved human subjects.

Statistics

As necessary, describe statistical methods and provide appropriate indicators of error or uncertainty (e.g., 95% confidence intervals). Specify any statistical software used.

Your article must follow, as appropriate, the sequence below from the STRICTA 2010 guidelines.

Methodology

The italicized 1–6 below is information that must appear in the Methodology. This is found in Table 1 of STRICTA 2010.

1. Acupuncture rationale 1abc as appropriate
2. Details of needling 2(a) to 2(g)
3. Treatment regimen 3ab
4. Other components of treatment 4ab
5. Practitioner Background 5
6. Control or Comparator interventions 6ab

Use the STRICTA 2010 Table 2 to complete the Methodology section:

- A. TRIAL DESIGN 3ab
- B. PARTICIPANTS 4ab
- C. INTERVENTIONS 5
- D. OUTCOMES 6ab
- E. SAMPLE SIZE 7ab

Use the STRICTA 2010 Table 2 to complete the Randomization section:

Randomization

- A. Sequence generation 8ab
- B. Allocation Concealment 9
- C. Implementation 10
- D. Blinding 11ab
- E. Statistical methods 12ab

Results

Present results in a logical sequence. Do not duplicate data in the text and tables/figures. Use the STRICTA 2010 Table 2 to complete the Results section.

- A. Participant flow 13ab
- B. Implementation
- C. Recruitment 14ab
- D. Baseline data 15
- E. Numbers analyzed 16
- F. Outcomes and Estimations 17ab
- G. Ancillary Analyses 18
- H. Harms 19

Discussion

Use the STRICTA 2010 Table 2 to complete the Discussion and Other Information sections. Note that we require a Conclusions section.

The discussion section should summarize the results and their implications. This section should also discuss the rationale of acupoints used such as mechanisms of action; clinical implications and usefulness; and benefit to the patient.

- A. Limitations 20
- B. Generalizability 21
- C. Interpretation 22

Conclusion(s)

Summarize the article's findings and their importance. This text may also give rise to questions, discuss ambiguous data, and recommend areas of further research.

Other Information

- A. Registration 23
- B. Protocol 24
- C. Funding 25

Many of the articles in our journal are singular case reports. It is obvious that some components of STRICTA may not be applicable to these articles. Nevertheless, we need to strive and maintain the quality of this journal. We urge you to plan your articles carefully and remember a single case is interesting, but not conclusive and subjected to much scrutiny especially by the Editor-in-Chief and the reviewers.

Standard Nomenclature for Medical Acupuncture

The following names and abbreviations are to be used in Medical Acupuncture. Recent changes in nomenclature have been adopted by the American Academy of Medical Acupuncture (AAMA) and are to be used in all articles submitted to the Journal. Please pay strict attention to these changes. For the most part, this is the system endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO). Common English anatomical, physiological, and pathological terms are capitalized to indicate their Chinese medical meanings, for example, Lung, Blood, Heat Deficiency, etc. The Alphabetic Code was agreed on by participants and observers at a meeting of the WHO Scientific Group held in 1989.

Standard International Nomenclature for Meridians

Principal Meridians

Name of Meridian	Alphabetic Code

Lung Meridian	LU
Large Intestine Meridian	LI
Stomach Meridian	ST
Spleen Meridian	SP
Heart Meridian	HT
Small Intestine Meridian	SI
Bladder Meridian	BL
Kidney Meridian	KI
Pericardium Meridian	PC
Triple Energizer Meridian	TE
Gallbladder Meridian	GB
Liver Meridian	LR
Governor Vessel (Dumai)	GV
Conception Vessel (Renmai)	CV

Extra Meridians

GV	Dumai	Governor Vessel
CV	Renmai	Conception Vessel
TV	Chongmai	Thoroughfare Vessel
BV	Daimai?	Belt Vessel
YinHV	Yinqiaomi	Yin Heel Vessel
YangHV	Yangqiaomai	Yang Heel Vessel
YinLV	Yinweima	Yin Link Vesseli
YangLV	Yangweimai	Yang Link Vessel

Miscellaneous

Fu	Hollow organs
Zang	Solid organs

Front Mu	Collecting points
Back Shu	Transporting points
Sheng	Generating cycle
Ke	Controlling cycle
Ah Shi	"Ouch" point
De Qi	Arrival of Qi

Command and Special Points

Ting	Well
Ying	Spring
Shu	Stream
Jing	River
He	Sea
Yuan	Source
Luo	Vessel
Xi	Cleft
Hui	Influential

Energy Levels or Axes

Tai Yang	Tai Yin
Shao Yang	Shao Yin
Yang Ming	Jue Yin

PaperPal Preflight

The Paperpal Preflight service is available for this journal. PaperPal Preflight allows authors to check their **Original Research** manuscripts for common errors prior to submitting a manuscript for consideration. Please note that this does not guarantee that your paper will pass all submission or other checks, nor that it will be considered for review.

The checks are configured for Original Research manuscripts only and may not be applicable to other manuscript types. There may be additional requirements for submission. Please review the full instructions for authors for guidelines.

The basic service is free. PaperPal preflight offers an *optional* fee-based service that will provide a report showing tracked changes and potential modifications. Please note that if this service is used, a clean copy of the manuscript must be uploaded to the submission system.

There is no obligation to use either the free or paid service. No editorial, review, nor any other decisions will be dependent on its use.

All manuscripts must be submitted through the journal's ScholarOne Manuscripts site.

General Manuscript Submission Guidelines and Policies for Mary Ann Liebert Journals

Last updated 7/7/2022 1:43:24 PM

Submission Preparation

All manuscripts must be prepared in accordance with the Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals (icmje.org). Please consult your specific journal's requirements for additional information.

All Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. journals follow the standards, guidelines, and best practices set forth by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE; publicationethics.org), the International Committee of Journal Medical Editors (ICJME; www.icmje.org), the World Medical Association (WMA); www.wma.net), and the American Medical Association (www.ama-assn.org).

Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. recommends that submissions follow standard relevant reporting guidelines. Please consult [The Equator Network](#) for more information.

PaperPal Preflight

The Paperpal Preflight service is available for most journals. PaperPal Preflight allows authors to check their **Original Research** manuscripts for common errors prior to submitting a manuscript for consideration. Please note that this does not guarantee that your paper will pass all submission or other checks, nor that it will be considered for review.

There may be additional requirements for submission. Please review the full instructions for authors for guidelines.

The basic service is free. PaperPal preflight offers an *optional* fee-based service that will provide a report showing tracked changes and potential modifications. Please note that if this service is used, a clean copy of the manuscript must be uploaded to the submission system.

There is no obligation to use either the free or paid service. No editorial, review, nor any other decisions will be dependent on its use.

All manuscripts must be submitted through the journal's ScholarOne Manuscripts site. Please refer to the individual journal's instructions for more information and to access the service.

Manuscript Formatting

Please check your journal's requirements for file formatting. Many journals require formatting compliance only on revision; however, unless stated, the file formatting should comply with the following requirements on submission.

Manuscript Files

The main text file, figure legends, and tables should be prepared in Microsoft Word. Some journals may accept LaTeX. Please consult your individual journal instructions for guidance.

File Naming

- All file names should be in English and contain only alphanumeric characters.
- **Do not include spaces, symbols, special characters, dashes, dots, or underscores.**
- Title each file with the type of content contained in the file (e.g., manuscript.doc, tables.doc, FigureLegends.doc, Fig1.tif, SupplementalData.pdf, etc.).

Figures

- Submission of high resolution .TIFF or .EPS figure files is preferred. Please upload as individual files.
- Cite figures consecutively in text within parentheses
- Images should not reveal the name of a patient or a manufacturer

Figure Legends

- A legend should be provided for each supplied figure.
- All legends should be numbered consecutively.
- Figure legends may be included at the end of the main text file or uploaded as a separate, double-spaced Word file.
- In each legend, provide explanations for any abbreviations or symbols that appear in the figure.
- If the figure is taken from a copyrighted publication, permission must be secured by the author(s) and supplied at the time of submission with appropriate credit listed in the legend. Permissions and associated fees are the responsibility of the author.

Tables

- Tables may be included after the references at the end of the main text file, or uploaded as a single, separate Word file. All tables should be editable.
- Provide a title for each supplied table.
- Cite tables sequentially in text within parentheses.
- Explain abbreviations used in the body of the table in footnotes using superscript letters, not symbols.
- If a table is taken from a copyrighted publication, permission must be secured by the author(s) and supplied at the time of submission with appropriate credit listed in the legend. Permissions and associated fees are the responsibility of the author.

Supplemental Files

- Supplemental files should be uploaded as individual files. Most text, photo, graphic, and video formats are

accepted. Ensure that patient identities are not revealed.

- Supplemental Information will not be copyedited or typeset; it will be posted online as supplied.
- For journals that publish accepted versions of papers prior to copyediting and typesetting, supplemental files will not be posted with the paper until after production has been completed.

Manuscript Structure

Specific journal requirements will vary, however the general order of elements in each manuscript should be

- Title page* with full manuscript title, all contributing authors' names and affiliations, a short running title, a denotation of the corresponding author, and a list of 4-6 keywords/search terms,
- Abstract,
- Main text without embedded figures or tables and with appropriate section headings, if applicable. Most research papers should be organized as follows: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, and Conclusions.
- Acknowledgments,
- Authorship confirmation/contribution statement (CRediT format is preferred)
- Author(s) disclosure (Conflict of Interest) statement(s), even when not applicable,
- Funding statement, even when not applicable,
- References,
- Tables included in the text or as a separate document,
- Figure legends at the end of the main text or in a separate Word file,
- Figures uploaded as individual high-resolution files,
- Supplemental files uploaded as individual files.

*Double-blinded journals require a separate title page with the title, all contributing authors' names and affiliations, a denotation of the corresponding author, author acknowledgements, disclosures, and related identifying information.

Your individual journal may require

- An Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (or waiver) statement and statement of patient consent as a separate paragraph after the methods section,
- Other relevant ethics attestations (see icmje.org for further guidance),
- Data sharing statement,
- Specific abstract and content sections, depending on manuscript type,
- Word count limits, tables/figure limits, and reference format requirements.

Please note that paragraphs should be no longer than 15 lines once typeset.

Pre-Publication Policies

Funding

Upon manuscript submission, the submitting agent will have an opportunity to enter funding/grant information. If funding information is entered correctly, the publisher will deposit the funding acknowledgements from the article as part of the standard metadata to Funder Registry. The entered information should include funder names, funder IDs (if available), and associated grant numbers. Special care should be taken when entering this information to ensure total accuracy. Funding information must also be provided within the manuscript.

Government Funded Research / Funder Requirements

Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. publishers adheres to national and international funder requirements.

We comply fully with the open access requirements of [UKRI](#), [Wellcome](#), and [NIHR](#). Where required by their funder, authors retain the right to distribute their author accepted manuscript (AAM), such as via an institutional and/or subject repository (e.g. EuropePMC), under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license for release no later than the date of first online publication.?

Other funders, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, have specific requirements for depositing the accepted version and/or the article of record version of the author manuscript in a repository after an embargo period. Authors funded by these organizations should follow the self-archiving terms and conditions of these separate agreements based on the policies of the specific funding institutions. If you have questions, please [contact us](#) for more information.

Peer Review

All submissions are subject to peer review after initial editorial evaluation for suitability. A minimum of two reviews are required for most journals if the manuscript proceeds to the review stage. Final decisions on the manuscript are solely at the discretion of the Editor(s).

Exclusivity

Manuscripts should be submitted with the understanding that they have neither been published, nor are under consideration for publication elsewhere, in the same form or substantially similar form. Conference abstracts are excluded. If work was presented at a conference, supply the name, date, and location of the meeting as a footnote on the title page of the submission.

Third-party Submissions and Integrity

If a third party is submitting the manuscript, the submitting agent designation must be used, with the identity of the submitting agent disclosed. We reserve the right to reject any manuscript that does not contain this disclosure. The authors are solely responsible for any manuscript submitted on their behalf.

Confidentiality

Editors and reviewers must maintain strict confidentiality of manuscripts during the peer-review process. Sharing a manuscript in whole or in part, outside the scope of what is necessary for assessment, is impermissible prior to an accepted manuscript's official publication date. Reviewers are not permitted to contact authors directly.

Sharing of Materials

Authors must honor any reasonable request for materials, methods, or data necessary to reproduce or validate the research findings during peer review unless it violates the privacy or confidentiality of human research subjects.

Conflicts of Interest by the Editor-in-Chief and/or Section Editors

The Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors will recuse themselves from participating in the review process of any manuscript in which there is a potential or actual competing interest.

Plagiarism, Peer Review, and Publication Integrity

Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., is committed to maintaining the integrity of the peer-review process by upholding the highest standards for all published articles. All manuscripts are analyzed and evaluated for plagiarism, peer review integrity, and publication integrity. Manuscript screening may be applied at any point in the process, from submission through post-publication. Plagiarized manuscripts or manuscripts with evidence of publication, image, or peer review misconduct will be rejected immediately. If publication misconduct is identified, we reserve the right to rescind acceptance prior to publication.

Authorship

Authorship is defined by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors in [Roles & Responsibilities](#). Contributors who do not meet all criteria for authorship should not be listed as authors, but they should be acknowledged (**with permission from the named parties**) in the *Acknowledgments* section with a description of their contribution to the work.

ORCID IDs

All submitting authors are required to complete their submissions using an ORCID identifier.

Corresponding Authors

One author should be designated as the corresponding author who will be responsible for communication between the authors and the journal editorial office and publisher. This individual will be responsible for ensuring all authors submit copyright forms, coordinating and responding to page proofs, and managing any other necessary contact during the peer review and production processes.

The submission system permits only one author to be identified as the corresponding author of record. However, we recognize that some submissions call for more than one corresponding author to be noted. In such cases, select one author to be the main point of contact for all communications regarding the peer review process of the paper, and on the title page of the manuscript, designate additional co-corresponding authors by including an asterisk after the authors' names in the byline. Include an accompanying footnote on the title page that reads, "**Co-corresponding authors.*" Please ensure that the title page carries the full affiliation details and email address of any author who should be noted as a corresponding author. If the paper is accepted for publication, the full contact information for all designated co-authors will be listed at the end of the article as per usual journal style.

Authorship Confirmation/Contribution Statement

An authorship contribution statement must be included with the manuscript. We strongly recommend that the authorship contribution statement follow the CRediT Taxonomy guidelines. (<https://credit.niso.org/>)

- Conceptualization (Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims.)
- Data curation (Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later re-use.)
- Formal analysis (Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data.)
- Funding acquisition (Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication.)

- Investigation (Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection.)
- Methodology (Development or design of methodology; creation of models.)
- Project administration (Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution.)
- Resources (Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools.)
- Software (Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components.)
- Supervision (Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team.)
- Validation (Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs.)
- Visualization (Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/data presentation.)
- Writing – original draft (Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation).)
- Writing – review & editing (Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre- or post-publication stages.)>

Example

Author 1: review and editing (equal). **Author 2:** Conceptualization (lead); writing – original draft (lead); formal analysis (lead); writing – review and editing (equal). **Author 3:** Software (lead); writing – review and editing (equal). **Author 4:** Methodology (lead); writing – review and editing (equal). **Author 5:** Conceptualization (supporting); Writing – original draft (supporting); Writing – review and editing (equal).

Changes in Authorship

Changes in authorship after submission, revision, or acceptance of a paper are generally not permitted, but the editorial leadership recognizes that in rare circumstances, it may be required. The policy for such cases is as follows:

- A request to alter authorship must be made in writing from the corresponding author to the Editor-in-Chief, with a detailed explanation for the request, the nature of the changes, and the names and affiliations of all authors.
- Written approval of all authors named on the manuscript, as well as any individual(s) being added to or removed from the author list must be provided. The Publisher can provide a form for this, if needed.
- Upon receipt of the request and all written approvals of all involved parties, the Editor-in-Chief will consider the request, render a decision, and notify the corresponding author.
- Post-publication changes or alterations to conference abstracts are prohibited.
- If authors are added or removed upon revision submission, without accompanying documentation of the request, the manuscript will be unsubmitted.

Name Change Policy

Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. supports the implementation of name changes for reasons including (but not limited to) gender identity, changes to marital status, religious conversion, etc.

Please contact the Director of Production and Editorial to confidentially update your record. Identification or documentation is not required, apart from confirmation that the change is on behalf of yourself (requests cannot be made for other individuals).

Updates will be made to the online versions of the article, but without a formal correction notice and without coauthors being notified.

We recommend authors update ScholarOne and ORCID records with any name changes.

Author Disclosure Statements

Upon submission, authors are required to fully disclose any interests, funding or employment that may inappropriately influence or affect the integrity of the submission. Authors should disclose

- *Competing Interests.* A competing interest exists when an individual (or the individual's institution) has financial or personal relationships that may inappropriately influence his actions. These competing interests may be potential or actual, financial or other.
- *Personal Financial Interests.* Stocks or shares in a company that may gain or lose financially from publication of the article; consulting fees or other remuneration from an organization that may gain or lose financially from publication of the article; patents or patent applications that are owned by or licensed to companies/institutions that may gain or lose value from publication of the article.
- *Funding.* Research support by organizations that may gain or lose financially from publication of the article. This support includes salary, equipment, supplies, honoraria, reimbursement or prepayment for attending symposia, and other expenses.
- *Employment.* Recent (within the past 5 years), current, or anticipated employment by an organization that may gain or lose financially from publication of the article.
- *Other Competing Interests.* Any personal relationship which may inappropriately affect the integrity of the research reported (by an author) or the objectivity of the review of the manuscript (by a reviewer or Editor), for example, competition between investigators, previous disagreements between investigators, or bias in professional judgment.

Affiliations

Authors should identify as their institution(s) the facility where the work was performed and executed. Changes in an author's affiliation after the work was completed, but prior to the submission or publication of the manuscript should be noted using a superscript asterisk in the author listing and a footnote on the title page indicating "*Current Address*" and listing the new affiliation. Corrections to affiliations or contact information due to relocation after publication is not permitted.

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securing permission to reproduce or adapt material from other published sources.

Ethics

Institutional Review Board Approvals/Waivers

When reporting research involving human data, authors must document the procedures followed in securing approvals from the responsible institutional and national review committee(s), along with confirmation that the research was completed in accordance with the [Declaration of Helsinki as revised in 2013](#).

An institution without an Institutional Review Board must arrange for an outside/external IRB to be responsible for initial and continuing review of studies conducted at the non-IRB institution. Such arrangements must be documented in writing in the manuscript.

If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration, the authors must explain the rationale for their approach and demonstrate that the institutional review body explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study. Approval by a responsible review committee does not preclude editors from forming their own judgment whether the conduct of the research was appropriate. Please see <https://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf> for additional information.

The publisher requires a statement from authors in the Materials and Methods section to confirm that the appropriate ethical approval has been received, that appropriate processes have been followed, and the name of the committee.

Informed consent by patients/participants should always be secured. A statement confirming that informed patient/participant consent was obtained is required in the Materials and Methods section.

If the study is judged exempt from review, a statement from the committee is required in the Materials and Methods section, including, if applicable, documentation of institutionally approved waiver of informed consent.

Ethics of Experimentation

See the following resources for studies involving human fetuses, fetal tissue, embryos, and embryonic cells:

- [NIH Grants Policy Statement](#)
- [National Conference of State Legislatures Embryonic and Fetal Research Laws](#)

Ethical Treatment of Animals

All peer-reviewed submissions containing animal experiments must comply with local and national regulatory principles and contain a statement in the **Materials and Methods** section of the main text stating whether national and institutional guidelines for the care and use of laboratory animals were followed.

Human Subjects: Patient Consent and Release

If applicable, it is incumbent upon the author(s) to obtain permission to reproduce any identifiable images of patients. Any identifying information should not be published in descriptions or photographs unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient (or patients' parent/guardian) gives written informed consent for publication. Informed consent for this purpose requires that an identifiable patient be shown the manuscript to be submitted. Authors should disclose to these patients whether any potential identifiable material might be available via the Internet as well as in print after publication. Nonessential identifying details should be omitted. Informed consent should be obtained if there is any doubt that anonymity cannot be maintained. For example, masking the eye region in photographs of patients is inadequate protection of anonymity. If identifying characteristics are de-identified, the manuscript should contain assurances/statements that such changes do not distort scientific meaning.

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