



## Manuscript preparation guideline

## **Guidelines for authors**

Millennium Journal of Health (MJH) is an official scientific journal of St Paul's Hospital Millennium Medical College. MJH is a peer-reviewed and online open access scientific journal that publishes articles of different categories in the domain of health sciences and does not charge publication fee to the authors.

## Before submitting a manuscript

Before submitting articles to MJH for publication, authors are highly advised to read the overall editorial policy of the journal and the guidelines as stipulated below. Authors can also refer elsewhere to the "Uniform requirements for Manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals" developed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) – <u>http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf</u>. The specific requirements of MJH are summarized below and in the editorial policy.

Fulfilling the requirements for submission is likely to avoid unnecessary delays that might be encountered during submission. The other practical way to be familiar with MJH specific guidelines for authors is by reading one or more previously published articles.

Authors need to be familiar with their rights and responsibilities and declare that they agree with the set of rules of the journal before submitting and publishing their manuscripts.

Every author or co-author must not exercise duplicate submission, plagiarism, selfplagiarism, or other publication misconduct. All manuscript submissions to MJH will be screened against the Crosscheck database using plagiarism detector software. Authors can also screen their manuscripts before submission using available software.

Manuscripts with insufficient originality or lack of nobility in the preparation may be rejected from the outset.





Apart from the "Uniform requirements for Manuscripts submitted to Biomedical Journals", authors are advised to prepare their manuscript in accordance with the specific formatting and style of this journal, which is again specific to the type of manuscript category (see below).

Note that the first and foremost important determinants for due consideration of the manuscript for peer review are the originality of the work and the appeal of the writing style in each section of the manuscript.

Making each section of the manuscript concise and handy is also an important undertaking to reach the wider audience of the journal. MJH exercises mainly expository and descriptive writing style in all the sections of a manuscript with little plus persuasive type in the discussion section. As the editors and peer reviewers are not responsible to make grammatical edits or rewriting the manuscript, the corresponding author has to make sure that it is written in clear and concise English.

It is the corresponding authors' responsibility to make sure that each co-author has read the manuscript before submission for peer review and before publishing the reviewed article. All contributors should disclose any conflict of interest before submitting the manuscript. Figures, Illustrations and/or Tables borrowed unchanged, adapted, or modified should get permission from the copyright owners, and need to be clearly noted.

## **Cover letter writing guide**

The cover letter should provide a statement that the manuscript has not been published and is not under consideration by another journal. It should also include the manuscript title, list of authors and their affiliations; full address of the corresponding author and word counts. It should also include a brief description of the research, why it is important, and why readers would be interested in it, contact information for all authors and any conflict of interest to be disclosed. Limit the cover letter to one page.





The title is the first impression the researcher makes with his/her manuscript to readers. Thus, the title should be concise, informative and attractive with probably some suspense to get the attention of readers. In other words, authors should give more attention to the title of the manuscript to make it very powerful to let the readers read the abstract. The content of the title may speak about research design and an outcome variable. The length of the title should not exceed 25 words with a running title of not more than 10 words.

Examples:

"A versus B in the treatment of C: A randomized controlled trial";

"Is X a risk factor for Y? A case-control study";

"What is the impact of factor X on subject Y: Meta-analysis and systematic review."

Do not start the title with redundancy-prone words: "Investigation of...", "Assessment of...", "Evaluation of...", "Analysis of...", "A research on..." and so on. They add little value to the title because research by its nature is all about those words.

Authors should also list the full names, institutional addresses and email addresses of all authors. If a collaboration group should be listed as an author, the group name can be listed as an author. The names of the individual members of the group can be included in the Acknowledgment section. However, the corresponding author should be indicated with a complete contact address.

Authors should identify the type of manuscript on the title page. E.g., *original article, meta-analysis, case report*, etc.

## **Guide to prepare abstract**

The abstract is the second most important impression the researcher makes beyond the title. The abstract should be a concise statement of background, objective, methods, results and conclusions each structured as separate paragraphs. Describing the context, objective, study setting and design, statistical analysis used, main findings and





conclusions with the single most important recommendation. The abstract should be started on a new page.

MJH's upper word count limit for the abstract section is 300 words. Avoid or minimize to the minimum (if it is a must to use) abbreviations. Do not cite references, Tables and Figures. Avoid phrases like "...are described", "...is discussed", "...is explained" in the abstract section. The abstract needs to stand alone in terms of giving the highlight information presented in the text.

Reports of randomized controlled trials should follow the Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (http://www.consort-statement.org/) extension for abstracts.

Therefore, the overall structure of the abstract for observational or experimental studies includes:

- **Background:** Should state the context and purpose of the study with the primary research question/objective.
- **Methods:** Has to emphasize the study design and statistical tests used.
- **Results:** Need to highlight the main findings pertinent to the set objective.
- **Conclusions:** Should be made based on the main finding and may infer potential implications. It is important to show the clinical relevance of basic science articles.
- **Trial registration: For clinical trials only,** the registration number and date of registration should be stated.

Note that the full title of the manuscript must be repeated on the Abstract page header and non-structured abstracts are accepted for manuscripts other than original articles and reviews.

#### Keywords:





Five to seven (5-7) keywords representing the main content of the article need to be listed in alphabetical order. Citing the country of study increases the visibility of the article for an international audience.

## Guide to prepare the main body of the manuscript

The main body of the manuscript needs to be structured and headed by: **background**, **methods**, **results**, **discussion** (study limitations, conclusion and recommendations, are included in the last three paragraphs of the discussion section).

**Original article and brief communication**: The sequence of sections for the original article and brief communication should be in the following order: Title page, Abstract, Background, Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgments (if any), References, Tables in numerical sequence (if any), Figures in numerical sequence (if any), and appendices (if any).

**Systematic review and meta-analysis**: follow the same sequence with the exception in the detail of the Methods section (Search strategy, inclusion criteria and study selection, data extraction, operational definitions, data analysis).

**Case Reports**: should be presented as Title page, Abstract, Introduction, Case description, and Discussion. Case reports can be rare cases, eye-catching and clinical challenges providing a learning point for the larger audience.

**Commentaries:** may vary with the subject matter interested in.

## Background

The background section should provide a summary of the existing literature and the significance of the current study to the existing body of knowledge. Partly, it is gaining knowledge on the area of the study and partly justifying the research question, theoretical or conceptual framework of the study. In short, the background section presents the rationale of the study and clearly indicates why it is worth doing, what is known and what is unknown before.





Organizing the literature review as background information, preferably from general to specific, from international to national data, or synthesizing the information thematically is acceptable. The authors' intelligence in extracting and synthesizing the available data to have a linked flow of ideas makes the background information more complete. Specific to experimental studies, authors need to state their hypothesis in the background section.

#### **Methods**

The methods section should describe the study design well using standard methodological terms, the study setting, the source and sample population studied, the characteristics of study participants or description of materials, the primary and secondary outcome measures in the first few paragraphs. The type of statistical analysis and the computer package used, including a power calculation when it is appropriate, has to be well described.

The methods section should also show a clear description of all processes, interventions and comparisons. Drug names should be generic. When proprietary brands are used in research, include the brand names in parentheses. The standard scientific name writing should be maintained (start with a capital letter for genus name and small letter for species name).

All measurements (length, height, weight, and volume) have to be reported in metric units (meter, kilogram, or liter) or their decimal multiples. Temperatures should be reported in degrees of Celsius (<sup>0</sup>C) and blood pressures in millimeters of mercury. Similarly, all laboratory measurements should be reported in the International System of Units (SI). Percentages need to be rounded to one decimal place.

Cross-sectional, case-control, and cohort studies should conform to the http://www.strobe-statement.org/ panel format. Randomized controlled trials should follow the http://www.consort-statement.org/checklists/view/32-consort/66-title by the http://www.consort-statement.org/ group. Meta-analyses developed and





systematic reviews should conform to the <u>http://www.prisma-statement.org/</u> statement criteria.

#### Results

The results section should be presented in text and, if the study is quantitative, in Tables and Figures. Results should be presented in a logical order, starting with sociodemographic data (if any) and/or the main finding of the current study. Highlight only important data from the Tables and Figures in the text. All quantitative data described in the result section should be put in absolute numbers with percentages in brackets.

The findings of the study, if appropriate, including results of the statistical analysis must be well described in words and numbers. In the first paragraph, demographic findings may be presented.

Tables, Figures and illustrations should have complete information to standalone and be self-explanatory. Limit the number of columns and rows in a Table to 8 and 12, respectively (Table length crossing a page is not attractive for readers). One or more of the following symbols can be used to further explain the content in the Table (\*,  $\dagger$ ,  $\ddagger$ ,). The full term of abbreviations used in the Table must be documented below the Table. Tables can be prepared as Portrait or Landscape form.

#### Discussion

Discussion should start by describing the main finding of the study in words – a brief synopsis of key findings. It should be followed by discussing the implications of the current findings in the context of existing evidence – what is added to the existing body of knowledge. Only the concept of other findings as well needs to be mentioned in the discussion section. Repeating the quantitative results in the discussion is a redundancy, and one of the reasons for at glance rejection of manuscripts. Extensive citation and discussion of published literature in the discussion (extending the background to the discussion section) is also malpractice and another major reason for rejection.





The limitations of the study, conclusions and recommendations need to be described and stated here. The conclusion is a summary of the main findings. You may state a hypothesis that may give some clue for further investigation on that specific matter.

# Formatting the text

Manuscripts should be prepared and submitted in a Word document. MJH uses American English spelling as a standard for uniformity in all published articles. Use 12font Arial, 1.5 space between lines with no indent between paragraphs. Apply automatic page numbering and line numbers in one of the manuscripts consecutively. Species names should be in italics to give emphasis. Statements copied from another work must be put in quotation marks ("") and the source should be mentioned.

#### Abbreviations and symbols

Generally, abbreviations are not recommendable. When they are important, they should be defined at first mention and need to be used consistently throughout the whole text. An abbreviation that occurs before the Background section, in the Tables and Figures heading are not acceptable. Symbols (like: &, @, :-, Q,  $\Delta$  and others) are not acceptable. Similarly, short forms of writings (like: i.e., n't, b/n, Rx, and others) are not acceptable.

#### Footnotes

Footnotes and endnotes are not acceptable except in table footnotes.

## Allowed manuscript length

The word count of the text, excluding the Title page, Abstract, References, Figures and Tables, is summarized in the Table below.

Type of article	Abstract	Abstract word count	Maximum word count of the text	Maximum Figures and Tables number	Maximum references number
Meta-analysis	Structured	300	3000	6	100
Systematic review/ Literature	Structured	300	4000	6	100





review					
Original article	Structured	300	4000	6	50
Brief communication	Structured	250	1500	3	20
Commentaries		250	1500	3	20
Case reports	Plane	150	1200	3	15

## **Citation and referencing**

The citation should follow the Vancouver style with superscript numbering in sequential order after the full stop.

Example: The finding in this study is consistent with the finding in X and Y studies.<sup>1,2</sup>

All references must be numbered and must be cited in the text in ascending numerical order. Incomplete reference listing is one of the major reasons for repeated back and forth manuscript submission.

The number of References for original articles, systematic reviews and meta-analysis, brief communication and commentaries, and case reports should not exceed the recommended maximum number listed in the above Table.

Listing of a reference to a journal should be according to the guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors ('Vancouver Style') and should include authors' name(s) and initial(s) separated by commas, the full title of the article, the correctly abbreviated name of the journal, year, volume number, issue number or supplement number (# Suppl) or special issue (# spec), and first and last page numbers. Up to six authors' initial names with or without et al can be listed. Punctuation marks should be carefully checked.

The titles of manuscripts should be abbreviated according to the style used in PUBMED/MEDLINE (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals).

Example:





- Berhan Y, Haileamlak A. The risks of planned vaginal breech delivery versus planned Caesarean section for term breech birth: A meta-analysis including observational studies. *BJOG* 2016; 123 (1): 49–57.
- Devries K, Watts C, Yoshihama M, Kiss L, Schraiber LB, Deyessa N, et al. Violence against women is strongly associated with suicide attempts: evidence from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women. Soc Sci Med 2011; 73(1):79-86.
- Ryan M, Ryan SJ. Chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy: considerations for diagnosis, management, and population health. *Am J Manag Care* 2018; 24(17 Suppl): S371-S379.

Books with chapter authors used as reference should be referenced as up to six chapters author(s) name and initial(s) with or without et al, section title, In: book title, edition/volume number, publisher/company name, year published, pages. For books with no section/chapter author, up to six authors' initial name with et al, book title, edition/volume number, publisher/company name, year published, pages. Example:

- Gastaut, H. Classification of status epilepticus. In: Status epilepticus mechanisms of brain damage and treatment advances in neurology. vol 34. Raven Press, New York; 1983: 15–35.
- 2. Roberts KB, Tomlinson JDW. The Fabric of the Body. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Oxford: Clarendon; 2002: 10-28.

Web references are also acceptable provided that the full URL is given/copied and pasted, and the date when the reference was last accessed is mentioned. All other information (Authors or Organization name, title) should be complete. If available, citing the DOI makes the source accessible and more credible.

Example:

 Berhan A, Berhan Y. Virologic Response to Tipranavir-Ritonavir or Darunavir-Ritonavir Based Regimens in Antiretroviral Therapy Experienced HIV-1 Patients: A Meta-Analysis and Meta-Regression of Randomized Controlled Clinical Trials.





PLoS ONE 2013; 8(4): e60814. Accessed in Oct 2018 from: doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0060814.

 Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute. Food composition table for use in Ethiopia Part IV. Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 1998, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Accessed in March 2013 from: www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/

Personal communications should be placed NOT in the list of references, but in the text in parentheses, given name, date and place where the information was gathered or the work carried out. Unpublished data should also be referred to similarly.

## Guide for preparation of figures

Figures should be numbered in the order they are first mentioned in the text and uploaded in this order. Multi-panel figures (those with parts a, b, c, d, etc.) should be submitted as a single composite file that contains all parts of the figure. Figures should be uploaded in the correct orientation. Figure titles (max 15 words) and legends (max 300 words) should be provided in the main manuscript, not in the graphic file. Figure keys should be incorporated into the graphic, not into the legend of the figure. Each figure should be closely cropped to minimize the amount of white space surrounding the illustration. Cropping figures improves accuracy when placing the figure in combination with other elements when the accepted manuscript is prepared for publication. For more information on individual figure file formats, see our detailed instructions. Individual figure files should not exceed 10 MB. If a suitable format is chosen, this file size is adequate for extremely high-quality figures.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the author(s) to obtain permission from the copyright holder to reproduce figures (or tables) that have previously been published elsewhere or all figures to be open access, authors must have permission from the rights-holder if they wish to include images that have been published elsewhere in non-open access journals. Permission should be indicated in the figure legend, and the source included in the reference list.





**Figure file types**: MJH accept the following file formats for figures: EPS (suitable for diagrams and/or images), PDF (suitable for diagrams and/or images), Microsoft Word (suitable for diagrams and/or images, figures must be a single page), PowerPoint (suitable for diagrams and/or images, figures must be a single page), TIFF (suitable for images), JPEG (suitable for photographic images, less suitable for graphical images), PNG (suitable for images), BMP (suitable for images), CDX (ChemDraw - suitable for molecular structures)

## Figure size and resolution

Figures may be resized during publication of the final full text and PDF versions which are detailed below.

Figures on the web: width of 600 pixels (standard), 1200 pixels (high resolution).

Figures in the final PDF version: width of 85 mm for half page width figure and width of 170 mm for full page width figure maximum height of 225 mm for figure and legend image resolution of approximately 300 dpi (dots per inch) at the final size.

Figures should be designed such that all information, including text, is legible at these dimensions. All lines should be wider than 0.25 points when constrained to standard figure widths. All fonts must be embedded.

## Guide to prepare table

Tables should be numbered and cited in the text in sequence using Arabic numerals (i.e., Table 1, Table 2, etc.). A table less than one A4 or Letter page in length can be placed in the appropriate location within the manuscript.

Tables larger than one A4 or Letter page in length can be placed at the end of the document text file. Please cite and indicate where the table should appear at the relevant location in the text file so that the table can be added in the correct place during production.





Larger data sets or tables too wide for A4 or Letter landscape page can be uploaded as additional files. Please see below for more information.

Tabular data provided as additional files can be uploaded as an Excel spreadsheet (.xls) or comma-separated values (.csv). Please use the standard file extensions.

Table titles (max 15 words) should be included above the table, and legends (max 300 words) should be included underneath the table.

Tables should not be embedded as figures or spreadsheet files but should be formatted using the 'Table object' function in your word processing program. Color and shading may not be used. Parts of the table can be highlighted using superscript, numbering, lettering, symbols, or bold text, the meaning of which should be explained in a table legend. Commas should not be used to indicate numerical values.

## Guide to prepare an additional file

As the length and quantity of data are not restricted to many article types, authors can provide datasets, tables, movies, or other information as additional files.

All Additional files will be published along with the accepted article. Do not include files such as patient consent forms, certificates of language editing, or revised versions of the main manuscript document with tracked changes. Such files, if requested, should be sent by email to the journal's editorial email address, quoting the manuscript reference number. Please do not send completed patient consent forms unless requested.

Results that would otherwise be indicated as "data not shown" should be included as additional files. Since many web links and URLs rapidly become broken, MJH requires that supporting data are included as additional files, or deposited in a recognized repository. Please do not link to data on a personal/departmental website. Do not include any individual participant details. The maximum file size for additional files is 20 MB each, and files will be virus-scanned on submission. Each additional file should be cited in sequence within the main body of the text. If additional material is provided, please list the following information in a separate section of the manuscript text: File





name (e.g., Additional file 1), File format including the correct file extension, for example, .pdf, .xls, .txt, .pptx (including name and a URL of an appropriate viewer if the format is unusual).

Title of data, Description of data, Additional files should be named "Additional file 1" and so on and should be referenced explicitly by file name within the body of the article, e.g. 'An additional movie file shows this in more detail [see Additional file 1].

## Authorship guide

As an international practice, authorship should be for substantial contribution in the professional work of the research, starting from generating the research idea and synthesis of the literature to engagement with in-depth analysis and write-up of the manuscript. Therefore, the understanding is that all co-authors of original research or review have participated in the actual work and take public responsibility for any section or the whole content of the published article, as per the recommendation of the ICMJE – http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf.

The order of the list of authors should be with the agreement of all the authors and is the responsibility of the corresponding author to follow the agreed-upon order by the team with a description of the level of participation and qualification for authorship as described in ICMJE. After submission, the order cannot be changed without the written consent of all co-authors. As an international experience, the most senior person, unless he/she is the major contributor and listed as first, can be listed last in the list.

The co-authors' responsibility is extended to giving responses to comments on published articles.

## **Corresponding author**

The corresponding author may not necessarily be the first or the last. The corresponding author is the one who has taken the responsibility of submitting the manuscript and is in charge of further communications with the editorial office of the journal. His/her contact address should be clearly stated, preferably with alternate contacts. It is also the corresponding authors' responsibility to follow the status of the





manuscript and give a response to the editor's and publication team's request before the stated deadline. In case, extension warrants, the corresponding author has to communicate with the editorial office as early as possible. The corresponding author takes the responsibility of approving the final version for publication.

#### Use of inclusive and restrictive language

Authors have to avoid marginalizing, offensive, misrepresentative words, convey stereotype messages or evoke existing stereotypes. Rather, it is advisable to entertain diversity, use gender-neutral terms unless specified, convey respect to all people, and be community sensitive.

As research reports should not be very persuasive, there is no need to overemphasize or exaggerate the findings of the study. Authors should also be careful in generalizing their research findings to the larger population.

## **Research ethics guide**

For primary studies involving humans, authors should make sure that their research protocol has been approved by a recognized institutional review board and appropriate consent is secured before data collection. The registration number and date of registration of controlled research trials should be described in the methods section. Manuscripts reporting studies involving human participants, human data or human tissue must, therefore, include a statement on ethics approval and consent (even where the need for approval is waived) before submitting. It is still important to mention "Not applicable" for studies that do not involve humans, human data or tissue. Authors are advised to refer to the guidelines of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) – https://publicationethics.org/.

#### Submission declaration

During the initial submission of a manuscript, authors are requested to declare that the work submitted to this journal for publication has not been published before (except in the form of an abstract, a pre-print or conference proceeding), or it is not under consideration for publication anywhere else.





If the manuscript is accepted by MJH for publication, authors ensure that the findings included in the submitted manuscript will not be published elsewhere in any language, without the written consent of the MJH.

The corresponding author assures that the submitted manuscript has been read and approved by all co-authors.

It is a must that all authors disclose any financial and personal relationships with companies or individuals who may inappropriately influence the outcome of the research work for any hidden agenda.

## Acknowledgment

Acknowledgment is mainly for those individuals who technically or financially supported the research work. It should be in a separate section after the discussion section and before the reference list.

## Author's contribution, competing interest, funding and data availability

The authors should report the contribution of all authors, any conflict of interest by all authors, source of the research fund, and data availability.

## Submitting manuscript

Manuscripts should be submitted through the ScholarOne electronic submission system. Since the electronic submission system is designed for authors' stepwise responses, it is not possible to jump to the next step before responding to the compulsory requests on each page. All sections of the manuscript (text, Tables, Figures and any artwork) should be submitted electronically.

Manuscripts submitted as an electronic mail attachment or by regular mail without justifiable reason will not be processed for review. Anything impossible for electronic version submission through the ScholarOne system needs ahead communication to the editorial office. Authors can follow their manuscript status by logging in to the ScholarOne submission system. Still, the corresponding author can receive email messages for early reminders, or early responses about the status of the manuscript.





- 1. The manuscript is prepared to conform the MJH policy and guidelines.
- 2. The word count of the title, abstract and text is within the journal's maximum limit.
- 3. The full Title of the manuscript is repeated on the Abstract page of the manuscript
- 4. Keywords are listed in alphabetical order.
- 5. The title of Tables and legends of Figures is complete/describing the content, study area and year of study.
- 6. Tables and Figures are placed after the reference list or provided as a separate file.
- 7. Figures and Table citations in the text match with the names provided.
- 8. Similarly, all references listed are cited in the text in ascending order.
- 9. 'Spell check' and 'grammar check' is done.
- 10.No abbreviation is used in the title and abstract. All abbreviations are initially defined and consistently used.
- 11. Punctuation marks in the reference listing are checked.
- 12. Page numbers are put at the bottom of each page starting from the Title page.
- 13. No identity of the authors is revealed except for the Title page.
- 14. The registration number and date of registration of controlled research trials are described.

#### Online Submission

Once the checklist is complete, the corresponding author needs to register and log in to the online submission website. Registration is mandatory for all online submissions. The registered author will be automatically provided a username and password. Authors are advised to contact the editorial office via email for any problem encountered during registration or submission.

Submitted manuscripts that are not as per the "Guidelines for authors" of this journal will be returned to the authors for correction. It is only those manuscripts that passed the assistant editor's check list will be forwarded to the associate editor for further preliminary evaluation before they are subjected to peer-review.





MJH exercises a double-blind review process; thus, authors should remove all possible identifiers from the body of the manuscript by restricting all identifiers on the cover page. Authors should also do all their best to hide their identity when citing their previous research works as well. Never use first person singular or plural when you are citing your work as a reference.

MJH editorial policy is to let manuscripts be preliminarily reviewed by editors and sent to two or more peer reviewers without revealing the identity of the authors to the reviewers. If accepted for production, more members of the publication team will be reviewing and making corrective comments before the final decision for publication. The editor has a discretionary right to the final decision regarding the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts. Authors have to be assured that the final decision is made after several in-house consultations. Therefore, the decision will be final.

## Accepted manuscript for publication

All accepted manuscripts would be copy-edited for grammatical and typographical errors by professional language editors. But authors should take note that manuscripts written in good English are much preferred from the outset to qualify for peer review, and probably for acceptance. Galley proofs will be sent to the corresponding author for the final touch (if any) before accepting for publication. At this stage, the corresponding author has to be prompt in responding within the given time. For all articles ready for publication, the corresponding author is requested to complete an 'Article Publishing Agreement', detailed in the editorial policy of the journal.