

Research and Publication Ethics

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The journal adheres to the ethical guidelines for research and publication described in Guidelines on Good Publication (<http://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines>) and the ICMJE Guidelines (<http://www.icmje.org>).

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Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, and/or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; 3) final approval of the version to be published; and 4) agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. Every author should meet all of these four conditions. After the initial submission of a manuscript, any changes whatsoever in authorship (adding author(s), deleting author(s), or re-arranging the order of authors) must be explained by a letter to the editor from the authors concerned. This letter must be signed by all authors of the paper. Copyright assignment must also be completed by every author.

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4. Conflict of Interest Statement

The corresponding author must inform the editor of any potential conflicts of interest that could influence the authors' interpretation of the data. Examples of potential conflicts of interest are financial support from or connections to companies, political pressure from interest groups, and academically related issues. In particular, all sources of funding applicable to the study should be explicitly stated.

5. Statement of Informed Consent and Institutional Review Board Approval

Copies of written informed consent documents should be kept for studies on human subjects, which includes identifiable information or sensitive information.

6. Process for Managing Research and Publication Misconduct

When the journal faces suspected cases of research and publication misconduct such as redundant (duplicate) publication, plagiarism, fraudulent or fabricated data, changes in authorship, an undisclosed conflict of interest, ethical problems with a submitted manuscript, a reviewer who has appropriated an author's idea or data, complaints against editors, and so on, the

resolution process will follow the flowchart provided by the Committee on Publication Ethics (<http://publication-ethics.org/resources/flowcharts>). The discussion and decision on the suspected cases are carried out by the Editorial Board.

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Cases that require editorial expressions of concern or retraction shall follow the COPE flowcharts available through the following link: <http://publicationethics.org/resources/flowcharts>. If correction is needed, it will follow the ICMJE Recommendation for Corrections, Retractions, Republications and Version Control available at: <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/publishing-and-editorial-issues/corrections-and-version-control.html>

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