

Marshall Journal of Medicine

Guidelines for Peer Review

Thank you, for agreeing to review manuscripts for Marshall Journal of Medicine (MJM).

- Assignments are to be completed within 10 days. Please keep this in mind when choosing to accept the manuscript for review
- If you encounter or foresee any problems meeting the deadline for a report, contact mjm@marshall.edu
- Confidentiality: Any manuscript sent for peer review is a confidential document and should remain so until it is formally published
- Conflicts of Interest Statement: Conflicts of interest are defined by MJM as occasions when an individual within the mechanism of the review process, either as an MJM staff, editor, reviewer, or as a prospective author or contributor to the journal, has an interest outside the scope of MJM that could unduly influence his or her conduct of responsibilities in the process
- Reviewers should not agree to review a manuscript if a conflict of interest appears to exist. Reviewers should notify the Editor in Chief immediately if a conflict of interest arises
- Examples of common conflicts of interest include:
 - Financial ties
 - Current or recent academic or professional collaboration
 - Personal or professional bias
- Reviewer Conduct
 - MJM aligns itself with the ICMJE Recommendations that can be found at <http://www.icmje.org/#peer>
 - Reviewers must not discuss or appropriate ideas or works prior to publication
 - Reviewers may not retain access to or copies of the manuscript
 - Reviewers may not apply knowledge of confidential information to any endeavor outside the scope of MJM
 - Statistical Knowledge: Reviewers are held responsible for reporting concerns regarding the process or implementation of statistical analysis. Reviewers are required to disclose their qualification for reviewing statistical techniques, as well as recommend evaluation by an independent statistical reviewer, if necessary

Points to Consider When Reviewing Articles

Peer review is vital to the MJM publication, serving as a quality-control for MJMs' scholarly publications. We asked that you provide detailed, constructive comments that will help editors make a decision on publication and guide the author(s) in improving their manuscript. A key consideration is whether the work has serious flaws that should preclude its publication, or whether there is additional data necessary to support the conclusions drawn. Your comments should be courteous and constructive, and should not include any personal remarks or personal details, including your name. Please follow the basic evaluation guideline.

1. Summarize briefly what the article is about.

Give your main impressions of the article, including the importance of the work to general readers — does this work matter to clinicians, researchers, policymakers, educators, or patients? Will it help our readers to make better decisions and, if so, how?

2. Impact

- Does the work include novel content?
- Do authors discuss clinical relevance/translational potential?

3. Significance

- Do the authors provide an adequate scientific framework that readers can use to understand why the findings are important?
- Do the authors discuss how their findings can be translational? (bench to bedside or vice-versa)

4. Clarity

Does the article read well? Does it have a clear message? Is the work relevant to the field?

5. General comments

Providing insight into any deficiencies is important. Explain and support your judgment so that editors and authors can fully understand the reasoning behind your comments. You should indicate whether your comments are your own opinion or are reflected by the data.

6. Specific comments (Tied to specific line numbers)

- Focus on the academic content of the article before addressing any grammatical errors and typos.
- Provide specific paragraph and line references to the article (e.g. in line 120, beginning "Inflammation is ..."). If you are citing conflicting evidence from literature, please include specific references (Author, Journal, issue/date) – reference list following comments.

7. Additional comments

- If the article is poorly organized, please suggest an alternative way to organize it.

8. Specific issues to look for:

- Is the title suitable to reflect the purpose or conclusions of study?
- Is the abstract succinct? Is the content consistent with the results presented in main article?
- Data added (not presented in main text) or important data missing?
- Does the introduction give an academic overview and include critical findings from previous studies?
- Detailed description of methods lacking, or acronyms undefined
- Flawed experimental design
- Sufficient or insufficient technical standard
- Lack of major controls (positive or negative)
- If article is particularly long (over approximately 1500 words), are all tables and figures needed?
- Are figure captions/scaling appropriate? Are units of measure correct?
- Has data been properly treated / adjusted statistically?
- Discussion of study limitations / avenue for future work?

Table of scores:

Aspect	Score*	Comments
Novelty		
Clinical Impact		
Clarity		
Adequate References		
Recommendation		

*Score:

- 5 – Excellent
- 4 – Very good
- 3 – Good
- 2 – Average
- 1 – Poor
- 0 – Very poor

*Recommendation to submit

- Accept
- Accept with minor revisions
- Accept with major revisions
- Reject

Accept	Acceptance without modification	Manuscript is relevant, conforms to editorial requirements, and warrants publication.
Accept with minor revisions	Implies intended acceptance	Requests revisions which are reviewed for acceptance by the editor
Accept with major revisions	Does not imply acceptance	Major revisions and re-review are necessary
Reject	Not accepted	Manuscript exhibits fatal flaws, does not fit within the expectations or scope of MJM, or contains perceived unethical material.