ARP RHEUMATOLOGY

INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS

Before writing the review
– Is this topic relevant to our journal?
– Does it address an important subject?
– Is there a clear hypothesis or aim stated?
– What does the study add to the current knowledge?
– Is there a clear clinical message?
– Which category does this manuscript best conform?
– Is the methodology adequate?
– Is the study original? Has it been previously published?
– Is the study timely?
– Are there any potential biases in reviewing this manuscript?

Title

– Does the title convey the content of the manuscript accurately?
– Should not contain acronyms
– As concise as possible

Abstract

– The abstract must appropriately summarize the manuscript;
– Should be understood without reading the manuscript.;
– Discrepancies between the abstract and the main body of the manuscript should be depicted;
– The abstract must contain the aim/objectives stated in a clear (not vague) and intelligible language;
– For original articles the authors should include:
  • Objectives: the major objective of the study;
  • Methods: how the study was performed;
  • Results: the study findings;
  • Conclusions: report whether the major goal was met.

Introduction

– Do authors provide a rationale for performing the study based on a review of the literature?
– Is the purpose of the study clearly explained?
– If the manuscript is an original article, is the hypothesis well defined?
– Is the introduction succinct?
– The purposes of the introduction are:
  • to provide the rationale for the study
  • to explain the study's goals
– The reviewers must address if the manuscript will bring a true new contribution to the medical knowledge:
  • does this manuscript cover an important topic?
  • has the research question been previously answered (was the topic of the manuscript well covered before)?

Methods

– Inadequate methodologies can lead to unreliable results.
– Ethical requirements need to be guaranteed
  • Has confidentiality been maintained?
  • Have accepted norms for the ethical treatment of animal or human subjects been respected?
  • Informed consent (if applicable)
  • Does the article copies previously published work? (Plagiarism)
  • Are the results in any way fraudulent?
– Are the methods reproducible?
  • Could other investigators reproduce the study using the methods as outlined and are they stated clearly?
– Are the methods suitable for the research question?
  • Do authors justify their choices for the study design (e.g. statistical methods, outcome measures, imaging techniques, etc)?
  • Do methods allow the stated hypothesis to be tested?
– Which type of research is it?
  • Observational/experimental?
  • Single case/case series/case control/cohort?
  • Randomized, controlled and blinded?
  • Meta-analysis?
  • Prospective or retrospective?
  • Cross-sectional or longitudinal?
– Is there summary information about the patient or experimental group(s), including length of follow up?
– Statistical considerations:
  • Sample size calculation: are there enough patients/experiments to draw clear conclusions?
  • Have the correct tests been used to compare outcomes?
  • Is there a clear description of the applied tests?

Results

– Are the results clearly explained?
  • Poorly executed analysis of the data
  • Poorly organized results
– Does the order of presentation of the results parallel the one of the methods?
– Are the results reasonable and expected, or are they unexpected?
– Are there results that were not introduced in the Methods section?

Discussion

– Is the study discussed against the background of current knowledge (include discrepancies)?
– Are the authors' conclusions based in the study results?
– Is there a clear clinical or scientific message?
– Was the initial hypothesis verified or falsified? Or if no hypothesis was proposed, was the research question answered?
– Are the results interpreted accurately?
– If there are unexpected results, do the authors adequately discuss them?
– Do the authors note limitations of the study? Are uncertainties and biases discussed? Are there additional limitations that should be highlighted?
– Is there either missing or duplicate information?
– Is the discussion concise? Where should it be shortened?

Tables and figures

– Accurate with a clear structure and presentation?
– Are data consistent with the body of the paper?
– Are figures and graphs appropriate and labelled?
  • Are they understood without referring to the remainder of the manuscript?
– Avoid duplication of data
– Do the figures and graphs adequately show the important results?
– Would a different figure better illustrate the findings?
– Do arrows need to be added to depict important or subtle findings?

References

– Does the reference list respect the journal' guidelines?
– Does the reference list contain errors?
– Are there important references that are not mentioned and that should be noted?
– Are there more references than are necessary?