Medical writing and publishing: the art of war
(or a few tips & tricks for success)

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Disclosures

• Guest Associate Editor, *Frontiers in Neurology* (2011-2012)

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http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org
Summary

• What is the importance of writing/publishing?

• How is a paper dealt with by scientific journals?

• Who did what? Authorship issues

• Other tips & tricks for successful writing
Writing and publishing: why?

- Career progression
- Securing grants
- Reflections on results = professional improvement
- Writing = staying up to date
- Personal satisfaction
- Scientific writer = better clinician
How is a paper dealt with by scientific journals?

Author submission → Editorial assistant checks compliance with guidelines → Editor-in-Chief

Immediate rejection → Associate Editor
Size matters...

SCIENTIFIC PAPER TRAIL
Number of research papers published in 2012 by leading science nations, and the proportion of each country's research this year that is in the top 1% of most-cited papers*. 

*Figures estimated from data for January–October; 39 countries with total above 6,000 papers shown.
How is a paper dealt with by scientific journals?

- Author submission
- Editorial assistant checks compliance with guidelines
- Editor-in-Chief
  - Immediate rejection
  - Associate Editor
    - Send for review
    - Rejection
    - Accept
- Suggestion

Choose and invite reviewers; assess their comments; ask authors to revise
Authorship

- 4 criteria must be met:
  - Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
  - Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
  - Final approval of the version to be published; AND
  - 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.

- Authors should be able to identify who holds responsibility for each aspect of the work, and have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of other coauthors.

- Those participating but not fulfilling the 4 criteria should be acknowledged.
Authorship

• As the leading author you should define the authors; do it before the research is carried out (appropriate modifications expected as work progresses)

• Who should not be an author (when not meeting the criteria):
  • Head of department
  • Residency supervisor
  • Your fellow resident who pays the favor back
  • Anyone taking care of the patient(s) in clinical routine
  • Those securing funding
  • Proofreader, language editor
Other tips & tricks

• Select an interesting topic

• Thorough literature review and appraisal; also useful for choice of references

• Appropriate study design

• Seek advice from expert in statistics

• Analyzing results: open mind, no bias

• Writing: clear, concise, concrete
Other tips & tricks

• Choose the appropriate journal
  • Check official “aims and scope” information [http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org](http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org)
  • Go through a few recent issues of the potential journals

• Write adequate type of manuscript
  • original research
  • review
  • case report
  • letter to the editor
  • perspective,…
Ten Tips for a Title

1. Main functions: identify the main topic of the work and attract readers;
2. The title must be concise, accurate, complete, specific;
3. Short titles have more impact;
4. As short as possible (10-12 words, 100 characters and spaces);
5. Avoid abbreviations;
6. Important words first;
7. Try to use keywords usable for indexing and search;
8. The title can include the results or the answer to the research question;
9. Announce the main points of the paper;
10. KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid). Omit unnecessary words e.g. “The” at the beginning of a phrase, or “Studies of.”
Other tips & tricks

• Abstract: concise, conveying clear message, should reflect what the paper discloses

• Effectively organize contents (introduction, methods, results, discussion/conclusions)

• Re-read your paper, re-write, re-read… ask a native English speaker to read it for you

• Comply rigorously with the journal’s submission guidelines, including reference citation and formatting

• Submission letter: captivating, short
Other tips & tricks

• Courteous reply to comments from reviewers and editor

• Make a point by point list: reviewer A, suggestion 1, reply… reviewer A, suggestion 2, reply… reviewer B, suggestion 1, reply

• Solid response, evidence-based whenever possible

• When re-submitting thank the reviewers and editors for their suggestions
Behave ethically

- Declare any potential conflicts of interest
- Avoid misconduct
- Protect the identity of patients
- Patient informed consent
- Seek approval from ethics committee
- Declaration of Helsinki
What else?

• Read regularly! Subscribe a high-quality journal; e-TOCs

• Review when invited! Every scientist/clinician’s duty, unique learning opportunity
Authors of research reports

Planning and conducting your research

It is important to be aware of reporting requirements and to think about reporting when you are planning and conducting your research study:

- UK NIHR Clinical Trials Toolkit provides practical advice to researchers in designing and conducting publicly funded clinical trials in the UK. Through the use of an interactive routemap, this site provides information on best practice and outlines the current legal and practical requirements for conducting clinical trials.
Crop Pollination Exposes Honey Bees to Pesticides Which Alters Their Susceptibility to the Gut Pathogen *Nosema ceranae*

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Abstract

Recent declines in honey bee populations and increasing demand for insect-pollinated crops raise concerns about pollinator shortages. Pesticide exposure and pathogens may interact to have strong negative effects on managed honey bee colonies. Such findings are of great concern given the large numbers and high levels of pesticides found in honey bee colonies. Thus it is crucial to determine how field-relevant combinations and loads of pesticides affect bee health. We visited pollinated bee hives in seven major crops to determine what types of pesticides bees are exposed to when pollinating for pollen of various crops and how field-relevant pesticide blends affect bees' susceptibility to the gut parasite *Nosema ceranae*. Our samples represent pollen collected by foragers for use by the colony, and do not necessarily represent foragers' roles as pollinators. In blueberry, cherry, cranberry, pumpkin and watermelon, bees collected pollen exclusively from weeds and wildflowers during our sampling. Thus more attention must be paid to how honey bees are exposed to pesticides outside of the field in which they are placed. We detected 33 different pesticides in the sample pollen, and found high fungicide loads. The insects esparrowate and phosmet were at a concentration higher than lethal dose in at least one pollen sample. While fungicides are typically seen as fairly safe for honey bees, increased probability of *Nosema* infection in bees that consumed pollen with a higher fungicide load. Our results need for research on sub-lethal effects of fungicides and other chemicals that bees are exposed to.


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Introduction

Honey bees, *Apis mellifera*, pollinators of agricultural crops, populations in many North American countries and increasing cultivation of pollination (FS) raise concern. behavior, learning and immune function [9,13,14]. Reduced immune functioning is of particular interest recent disease-related declines of bee including honey. Pesticide and toxin exposure increases susceptibility to mortality from diseases including the gut parasite *Nosema ceranae* [14,15]. These increases may be linked to insecticide-induced...
Announcing the official launch of the latest journal in The Lancet family of specialty titles, dedicated to mental health.
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