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Research ethics

The journal adheres to the ethical guidelines for research and publication described in Guidelines on Good Publication (<https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines>) and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Guidelines (<https://www.icmje.org>).

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Authorship credit should be based on (1) substantial contributions to the 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 to ensure 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. A copyright assignment must also be completed by every author.

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Manuscripts can be republished if they satisfy the conditions of secondary publication in the ICMJE Recommendations (https://www.icmje.org/urm_main.html).

Conflicts of interest

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.

Statement of human and animal rights

Clinical research should be done in accordance of the Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki of 1975 (revised 2013) (<https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/>). Clinical studies that do not meet the Declaration of Helsinki will not be considered for publication. Human subjects should not be identifiable, such that patients' names, initials, hospital numbers, dates of birth, or other protected healthcare information should not be disclosed. For animal subjects, research should be performed based on the National or Institutional Guide

for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the ethical treatment of all experimental animals should be maintained.

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. For clinical studies of human subjects, a certificate, agreement, or approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the author's institution is required. If necessary, the editor or reviewers may request copies of these documents to resolve questions about IRB approval and study conduct.

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 (COPE, <https://publicationethics.org/resources/flowcharts>). The discussion and decision on the suspected cases are carried out by the Editorial Board.

Process for handling cases requiring corrections, retractions, and editorial expressions of concern

Cases that require editorial expressions of concern or retraction

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