



## Instructions for authors

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THE NORTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF  
FOOD AND NUTRITION RESEARCH

*Making Nutrition a Development Priority in Africa*

# Instructions for authors

*The NAJFNR Editorial Office*

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## 1 General information

The North African Journal of Food and Nutrition Research (NAJFNR) ISSN: 2588-1582 is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access, online journal with no publication charges, costs, or fees. The journal is committed to the rapid publication of the latest research and studies in all fields of human nutrition and food sciences. NAJFNR is dedicated to publishing innovative and high-quality papers providing a better understanding of the advances in nutrition fields such as original research, review, short communication, correspondence, case reports, hypothesis formation, expert opinion, and commentaries. The NAJFNR publishes papers that address human, animal, cellular, or molecular nutrition and food science.

The primary purpose of NAJFNR is to act as an advancing professional knowledge usable by researchers and practitioners across the range of research and practice issues such as:

- a. *Nutritional Science (NS)*: study of food, nutrients, and other food substances, the intake and biochemical processing of food substances, their relationship to health and disease, and the application of this information to policy and programs.
- b. *Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)*: evidence-based medical approach to treating certain chronic conditions through the use of an individually-tailored nutrition plan. This nutrition plan aims to benefit the patient's health and reduce health-care costs.
- c. *Public Health Nutrition (PHN)*: is the application of nutrition and physical activity to the promotion of good health, the primary prevention of diet-related illness of groups, communities, and populations (not individuals) through health services, program development, and policy advocacy.
- d. *Food Science and Biotechnology (FSB)*: is the study of the physical, biological, and chemical makeup of food; the causes of food deterioration; and the concepts underlying food processing. Some disciplines can be included such as chemistry, engineering, microbiology, and nutrition to the study of food to improve the safety, nutrition, wholesomeness, and availability of food.

The journal also seeks to increase consumer awareness of the interrelationship between nutrition, physical activity, and lifestyle to ameliorate health across the lifespan and to determine how health policies can be improved by taking a more nutrition-focused approach.

We welcome manuscripts describing observational and interventional studies as well as basic scientific reports on the topics of food sciences, diets, metabolism, nutrients, clinical nutrition, social sciences, and health economics related to nutrition, eating behavior and disorders, and nutrition policies. Physical activity partnered with nutrition education, and strategies to reduce food insecurity are also valued.

Specific topics covered in the journal include:

1. Food Chemistry, Engineering, Processing and Packaging
2. Human and Clinical Nutrition
3. Infant, Child, and Adolescent Nutrition
4. Nutrition, Metabolism, and Prevention of NCDs
5. Public Health Nutrition Policy & Economics
6. Nutritional Immunology and Reproduction
7. Food Microbiology, Safety and Toxicology
8. Sport and Exercise Nutrition
9. Functional and Novel Foods
10. Nutrition Education and Dietetics

### 1.1 Language and grammar

Uniformly American English.

### 1.2 Types of manuscripts

#### Original articles

Randomized controlled trials, intervention studies, studies of screening and diagnostic tests, outcome studies, cost-effectiveness analyses, case-control series, and surveys with high response rates.

*Abstract: No more than 300 words. Word limit 5000 words (excluding abstract, references, and tables), 45 references, no more than 6 figures/tables. The text should be divided into sections with the headings Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, References, Tables, and Figure legends.*

#### Brief / Short Communication

Randomized controlled trials, intervention studies, studies of screening and diagnostic tests, outcome studies, cost-effectiveness analyses, case-control series, and surveys with high response rates.

*Abstract: 200 words maximum. Word limit 2500 words, 20 references, no more than 2 figures/tables*

#### Review articles and meta-analysis

Systemic critical assessments of literature and data sources.

*Abstract: 300 words maximum. Word limit 10000 words, 150 references, no more than 5 figures and tables. Extra figures will be published as supplementary files.*

#### Correspondence

Correspondence provides readers with a forum for comment on papers published in a previous issue (< 6 months) of the journal or to address new issues relevant to the research community.

*No abstract required; Main body of text (tables/figures, and references) not to exceed 1,000 words; Max 2 tables or figures and no more than 7 references.*

### Case reports

New/interesting/very rare cases can be reported. Cases with clinical significance or implications will be given priority, whereas, mere reporting of a rare case may not be considered.

*Max 10 references Up to 1000 words excluding references and abstract and up to 10 references*

### Letter to the Editor

Should be a short, decisive observation. They should not be preliminary observations that need a later paper for validation.

*Up to 400 words and 4 references*

### Viewpoint

Personal views are welcome, and the length should be about 1500 words (not including tables, figures, and references). Authors of this type of article should sign their real names; no anonymous pieces are published.

### Announcement of conferences

Should be submitted with the name and address of the person from whom additional information can be obtained.  
*Up to 100 words.*

## 1.3 Authorship criteria

Authorship credit should be based only on substantial contributions. NAJFNR recommends that authors utilize the CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) in their submissions.

The 14 contributor roles as defined by CRediT are:

- a. **Conceptualization**
- b. **Data curation**
- c. **Formal analysis**
- d. **Funding acquisition**
- e. **Investigation**
- f. **Methodology**
- g. **Project administration**
- h. **Resources**
- i. **Software**
- j. **Supervision**
- k. **Validation**
- l. **Visualization**
- m. **Writing – original draft**
- n. **Writing – review & editing**

We encourage the authors to explore the CRediT website (<https://credit.niso.org/contributor-roles-defined/>) for comprehensive descriptions of each role.

General supervision of the research group is not sufficient for authorship. Each contributor should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.

The order of naming the contributors should be based on the relative contribution of the contributor towards the study and writing the manuscript.

Once submitted the order cannot be changed without written consent of all the contributors.

### For *Original Articles*

There is no limitation to the number of co-authors on a paper. However, it is important to ensure that all of them have contributed in significant ways and can actually qualify to be a co-author.

For *Review Articles*, the number of contributors should not exceed six (6). A justification should be included if the number of contributors exceeds these limits. Only those who have done substantial work in a particular field can write a review article. A short summary of the work done by the contributor (s) in the field of review should accompany the manuscript.

This is an example of a CRediT statement to follow:

**Author 01:** Conceptualization, methodology, data curation, formal analysis, software. **Authors 02 and 03:** investigation, visualization, writing - original draft, writing - review & editing. **Authors 04 and 05:** Conceptualization, data curation, investigation, methodology. **Author 06:** Conceptualization, methodology, project administration, resources, supervision, validation."

## 1.4 CRediT author statement

CRediT is a standardized framework that identifies 14 distinct roles a researcher can play in a research project, ranging from conceptualization and formal analysis to data curation and software development. By aligning individual contributions with the appropriate CRediT roles, authors gain several key benefits:

- Providing recognition and visibility for team contributions that are key to research output being published,
- Fostering open communication and transparency, promoting consensus, and reducing the risk of disputes,
- Allowing evaluators to accurately assess researcher impact and expertise within projects,
- Facilitating seamless tracking of an individual's diverse contributions across various research endeavors,

The submitting author bears the responsibility of ensuring CRediT roles accurately reflect the contributions of all individuals involved. We expect all co-authors to review and agree upon their CRediT roles as shared by the submitting author.

## 1.5 Changes in authorship

Authors should determine the order of authorship among themselves and should settle any disagreements prior to submitting their manuscript. Changes in authorship (i.e., order, addition, and deletion of authors) should be discussed and approved by all authors. Any requests for such changes in authorship after initial manuscript submission and before publication should be explained in writing to the editor in a letter or email from all authors and should send the original signed written consent of all authors.

## 1.6 Retraction policy

NAJFNR should consider retracting a publication if:

- Editors have clear evidence that the findings are unreliable, either as a result of misconduct (e.g., data fabrication) or honest error (e.g., miscalculation or experimental error);
- The findings have previously been published elsewhere without proper cross-referencing, permission, or justification (i.e., cases of redundant publication);
- It constitutes plagiarism;
- It reports unethical research

NAJFNR abides by the Retraction Guidelines of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (<https://publicationethics.org/files/cope-retraction-guidelines-v2.pdf>).

# 2 Manuscript submission

## 2.1 Editorial process

A manuscript will be reviewed for possible publication with the understanding that it is being submitted to NAJFNR alone at that point in time and has not been published anywhere, simultaneously submitted, or already accepted for publication elsewhere.

The journal expects that authors would authorize one of them to correspond with NAJFNR for all matters related to the manuscript. On submission, editors review all submitted manuscripts initially for suitability for formal review. Manuscripts with insufficient originality, serious scientific or technical flaws, or lack of a significant message are rejected before proceeding for formal peer-review. Manuscripts that are unlikely

to be of interest to the NAJFNR readers are also liable to be rejected at this stage.

Manuscripts that are found suitable for publication in NAJFNR are sent to two or more expert reviewers. The journal follows a double-blind review process, wherein the reviewers and authors are unaware of each other's identity. Every manuscript is also assigned to a member of the editorial team, who based on the comments from the reviewers takes a final decision on the manuscript. The comments and suggestions (acceptance/rejection/amendments in manuscript) received from reviewers are conveyed to the corresponding author. The author is requested to provide a point-by-point response to reviewers' comments and submit a revised version of the manuscript. This process is repeated till reviewers and editors are satisfied with the manuscript.

Manuscripts accepted for publication are copy-edited for grammar, punctuation, print style, and format. The proofreading paper version will be sent to the corresponding author. The corresponding author is expected to return the corrected proofs within two days. It may not be possible to incorporate corrections received after that period. The whole process of submitting the manuscript to the final decision and sending and receiving proofs is completed online. To achieve faster and greater dissemination of knowledge and information, the journal publishes articles online soon after acceptance.

All manuscripts must be submitted online through the website: <https://najfnr.com/home/about/submissions>. First-time users will have to register at this site. Registration is free but mandatory. Registered authors can keep track of their articles after logging into the site using their username and password. Authors do not have to pay any fees for submission of articles. If authors experience any problems, please contact the editorial office by E-mail: [contact@najfnr.com](mailto:contact@najfnr.com).

The submitted manuscripts that are not as per the "Instructions for Authors" would be returned to the authors for technical correction before they undergo editorial/peer review. Generally, the manuscript should be submitted in the form of several separate files (the website has a limit of 80 MB per uploaded file).

Submission of a manuscript implies: that the work described has not been published before; that it is not under consideration for publication anywhere else; that its publication has been approved by all co-authors, if any, as well as by the responsible authorities – tacitly or explicitly – at the institute where the work has been carried out. The publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any compensation claims.

## 2.2 Permissions

Authors wishing to include figures, tables, or text passages that have already been published elsewhere are required to obtain permission from the copyright owner(s) and to include evidence

that such permission has been granted when submitting their papers. Any material received without such evidence will be assumed to originate from the authors.

The full submission procedure for manuscripts is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoPCy88Gyvs>

### 3 Title page

The title page should include:

- The type of manuscript (original article, review article, meta-analysis, correspondence, etc.). Title of the manuscript, names of all authors/contributors, and name(s) of department(s) and/or institution(s) to which the work should be credited. All information that can reveal your identity should be here. Use doc files. Do not zip the files.

Please visit <https://najfnr.com/home/about/submissions>

You can download the Title page from this URL address:

[http://najfnr.com/journal\\_docs/Title\\_page.docx](http://najfnr.com/journal_docs/Title_page.docx)

### 4 Manuscript

The main text of the article, starting from “Abstract” to “References” should be in this file.

The file must not contain any mention of the authors’ names or initials or the institution at which the study was done or acknowledgments. Page headers/running title can include the title but not the authors’ names. Manuscripts not in compliance with the Journal’s blinding policy will be returned to the corresponding author. Use doc/docx files. Do not zip the files. Do not incorporate images in the file. The pages should be numbered consecutively.

#### **Abstract**

Abstracts should be structured in sections (Background, Aims, Materiel/Subjects and Methods, Results, Conclusion, and Keywords) and should not contain any undefined abbreviations or unspecified references.

#### **Keywords**

*Please provide 4 to 6 keywords that can be used for indexing purposes.*

However, to be effective, Keywords must be chosen carefully. They should:

- Represent the content of your manuscript;
- Be specific to your field or sub-field.

Avoid duplicating any terminology already used in the paper’s title. Key terms that are shared with your manuscript title and/or abstract can help to increase the visibility of your study in article searches. For more information please visit: <https://www.aje.com/arc/editing-tip-choosing-effective-keywords/>

The use of Medical Subheading of the NIH: US. National Library of Medicine MeSH Browser (2021 MeSH ) is highly recommended and available here:



<https://meshb.nlm.nih.gov/search>

### 5 Text

#### 5.1 Text formatting

Manuscripts should be submitted in Microsoft Word.

- Use a normal, plain font (e.g., 12-point Times New Roman) for text.
- Use italics for emphasis.
- Use the automatic page numbering function to number the pages.
- Do not use field functions.
- Use tab stops or other commands for indents, not the space bar.
- Use the table function, not spreadsheets, to make tables.
- Use the equation editor or Math Type for equations.
- Save your file in docx format (MS Word 2007 or higher).

#### 5.2 Headings

Please use no more than three levels of displayed headings.

#### 5.3 Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be defined at first mention and used consistently thereafter.

#### 5.4 Introduction and background

The introduction should briefly place the study in a broad context and highlight why this study is important. It should be linked to earlier work in the field; it is not meant to be an extensive review of the literature. The introduction should assume that the reader is well-informed in the field and should therefore be as concise and brief as possible. Literature should be cited only to the extent that it helps the reader understand why the question is asked. End the introduction with a stated aim or question, preferably expressed as a testable hypothesis. Keep the introduction comprehensible to scientists working outside the topic of the paper.

## 5.5 Methods including statistics

The Methods section should include only information that was available at the time the plan or protocol for the study was written; all information obtained during the conduct of the study belongs in the Results section. Selection and Description of Participants: Describe your selection of the observational or experimental participants (patients or laboratory animals, including controls) clearly, including eligibility and exclusion criteria and a description of the source population. Because the relevance of such variables as age and sex to the object of research is not always clear, authors should explain their use when they are included in a study report; for example, authors should explain why only subjects of certain ages were included or why women were excluded. The guiding principle should be clarity about how and why a study was done in a particular way. When authors use variables such as race or ethnicity, they should define how they measured the variables and justify their relevance. Technical information: Identify the methods, apparatus (give the manufacturer's name and address in parentheses), and procedures in sufficient detail to allow other workers to reproduce the results. Give references to established methods, including statistical methods (see below); provide references and brief descriptions for methods that have been published but are not well known; describe new or substantially modified methods, give reasons for using them, and evaluate their limitations. Identify precisely all drugs and chemicals used, including generic name(s), dose(s), and route(s) of administration. Authors submitting review manuscripts should include a section describing the methods used for locating, selecting, extracting, and synthesizing data. These methods should also be summarized in the abstract. Reports of randomized clinical trials should present information on all major study elements, including the protocol, assignment of interventions (methods of randomization, concealment of allocation to treatment groups), and the method of masking (blinding), based on the CONSORT Statement (Moher D, Schulz KF, Altman DG: The CONSORT Statement: Revised Recommendations for Improving the Quality of Reports of Parallel-Group Randomized Trials. *Ann Intern Med.* 2001; 134: 657-662, also available at <http://www.consort-statement.org>). Authors submitting review articles should include a section describing the methods used for locating, selecting, extracting, and synthesizing data. These methods should also be summarized in the abstract.

Concerning statistics, put a general description of methods in the Methods section. When data are summarized in the Results section, specify the statistical methods used to analyze them. Avoid non-technical uses of technical terms in statistics, such as 'random' (which implies a randomizing device), 'normal', 'significant', 'correlations', and 'sample'. Define statistical terms, abbreviations, and most symbols.

For all  $p$ -values include the exact value and not less than 0.05 or 0.001.

## 5.6 Results

Present your results in logical sequence in the text, tables, and illustrations, giving the main or most important findings first. Do not repeat in the text all the data in the tables or illustrations; emphasize or summarize only important observations. Extra or supplementary materials and technical details can be placed in an appendix where it will be accessible but will not interrupt the flow of the text; alternatively, it can be published only in the electronic version of the journal. When data are summarized in the Results section, give numeric results not only as derivatives (for example, percentages) but also as the absolute numbers from which the derivatives were calculated, and specify the statistical methods used to analyze them. Restrict tables and figures to those needed to explain the argument of the paper and to assess its support. Use graphs as an alternative to tables with many entries; do not duplicate data in graphs and tables. Avoid non-technical uses of technical terms in statistics, such as "random" (which implies a randomizing device), "normal," "significant," "correlations," and "sample." Where scientifically appropriate, analyses of the data by variables such as age and sex should be included.

## 5.7 Discussions

Include a summary of key findings (primary outcome measures, secondary outcome measures, results as they relate to a prior hypothesis); Strengths and limitations of the study (study question, study design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation); Interpretation and implications in the context of the totality of evidence (is there a systematic review to refer to, if not, could one be reasonably done here and now?, what this study adds to the available evidence, effects on patient care and health policy, possible mechanisms); Controversies raised by this study; and Future research directions (for this particular research collaboration, underlying mechanisms, clinical research). Do not repeat in detail data or other material given in the Introduction or the Results section. In particular, contributors should avoid making statements on economic benefits and costs unless their manuscript includes economic data and analyses. Avoid claiming priority and alluding to work that has not been completed. State new hypotheses when warranted, but clearly label them as such.

## 5.8 Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments of people, grants, funds, etc. should be placed on the title page file. The names of funding organizations should be written in full.



## 6 References

### 6.1 Citation

Reference citations in the text should be identified by numbers in square brackets. You can use Endnote of Clarivate Analytics (<https://www.myendnoteweb.com/EndNoteWeb.html>) or Mendeley (<https://www.mendeley.com/>)

Some examples:

- As recommended by the ADA [12].
- These results agree with those of Amos *et al.* [7].
- Several studies have reported that dietary fiber intake increases during fasting periods [42-45, 47].

### 6.2 References list

The list of references should only include works that are cited in the text and that have been published or accepted for publication. Personal communications and unpublished works should only be mentioned in the text. The entries in the list should be numbered consecutively.

Authors should refer to this tutorial on how to cite PubMed articles in APA: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6c1\\_BOQN0g0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6c1_BOQN0g0)

Or use APA Citation **Generator 7**, to generate all types of references at:

[https://www.citefast.com/?s=APA7#\\_Journal](https://www.citefast.com/?s=APA7#_Journal)

<https://app.bibguru.com/>

<https://www.scribbr.com/apa-citation-generator/>

**Examples:**

**Journal article (with DOI) using APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition referencing system**

Vineis, P., & Wild, C. P. (2014). Global cancer patterns: Causes and prevention. *The Lancet*, 383(9916), 549-557. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(13\)62224-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(13)62224-2)

**Book**

Barnett A. Type 2 Diabetes. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford Diabetes Library: 2012: pp. 179. ISBN: 9780199596171

**Book chapter**

Solensky R. Drug allergy: desensitization and treatment of reactions to antibiotics and aspirin. In: Lockey P, ed. Allergens and Allergen Immunotherapy. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York, NY: Marcel Dekker; 2004:585-606.

**Website (Online document)**

*Diet and cancer.* (2019, July 1). World Cancer Research Fund. Available from: <https://www.wcrf.org/dietandcancer>. [Last accessed on 2020 August 12].

### 6.3 Citation

The NAJFNR does not promote citations from predatory and “fake” journals/publishers which will affect the journal’s reputation in indexing databases. We ensure that the publication process is as rigorous as possible to ensure that the article meets recognized and acclaimed international standards.

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*N.B. Given the recent spread of fee-charging OA journals, unwary and naïve authors may not be able to distinguish between legitimate peer-review journals and those with fake peer reviews. The North African Journal of Food and Nutrition Research has adopted a policy against those “fake” journals. Therefore, no reference should be cited from these journals and must be replaced or completely removed. Please visit the following links to check the eligibility of your journal.*

<https://predatoryreports.org/the-list>

<https://predatoryjournals.com/journals/>

<https://beallist.net/changelog/>

<https://beallist.net/>

<https://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>

<https://www.professeur-alexandre-georges.info%2Fdolos-list>

<https://guides.library.yale.edu/c.php?g=296124&p=1973764>

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## 7 Tables

- The number of both tables and figures depends on the type of manuscript. Please refer to section **1.2 Types of manuscripts**
- All tables are to be numbered using Arabic numerals.
- Tables should always be cited in text in consecutive numerical order.
- For each table, please supply a table caption (title) explaining the components of the table.
- Identify any previously published material by giving the original source in the form of a reference at the end of the table caption.
- Footnotes to tables should be indicated by superscript lower-case letters (or asterisks for significance values and other statistical data) and included beneath the table body.

## 8 Figures

Please submit good quality color images. The size of the image can be reduced by decreasing the actual height and width of the images (keep up to 1600 × 1200 pixels or 5–6 inches). Images can be submitted as JPEG files and should be supplied at an effective resolution of 300 pixels per inch (PPI). Do not zip the files.

- The number of both tables and figures depends on the type of manuscript. Please refer to section **1.2 Types of manuscripts**
- Supply all figures electronically. Common formats are accepted; however, TIFF, JPEG, EPS, and PDF are preferred.
- Indicate what graphics program was used to create the artwork.
- All figures are to be numbered using Arabic numerals.
- Figures should always be cited in the text in consecutive numerical order.
- Figure parts should be denoted by lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc.).
- If an appendix appears in your article and it contains one or more figures, continue the consecutive numbering of the main text. Do not number the appendix figures, "A1, A2, A3, etc." Figures in online appendices (Supplementary Data) should, however, be numbered separately.
- Figure legends: These should be brief, and specific and appear on a separate manuscript page after the "References" section.

### 8.1 Figure captions

- Each figure should have a concise caption describing accurately what the figure depicts. Include the captions in the text file of the manuscript, not in the figure file.
- Figure captions begin with the term Fig. in bold type, followed by the figure number, also in bold type.
- No punctuation is to be included after the number, nor is any punctuation to be placed at the end of the caption.

### 8.2 Figure placement and size

- Figures should be submitted separately from the text.
- When preparing your figures, size figures to fit in the column width.
- The figures should be 39 mm, 84 mm, 129 mm, or 174 mm wide and not higher than 234 mm.
- Figures should be

### 8.3 Permissions

If you include figures that have already been published elsewhere, you must obtain permission from the copyright owner(s) for both the print and online format. Please be aware that some publishers do not grant electronic rights for free and that NAJFNR will not be able to refund any costs that may have

occurred to receive these permissions. In such cases, material from other sources should be used.

## 9 Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest

Authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could influence or bias the work. Although an author may not feel there are conflicts, disclosure of relationships and interests affords a more transparent process, leading to an accurate and objective assessment of the work. Awareness of real or perceived conflicts of interest is a perspective to which the readers are entitled and is not meant to imply that a financial relationship with an organization that sponsored the research or compensation for consultancy work is inappropriate. Examples of potential conflicts of interest that are directly or indirectly related to the research may include but are not limited to the following:

- Research grants from funding agencies (please give the research funder and the grant number);
- Honoraria for speaking at symposia;
- Financial support for attending symposia;
- Financial support for educational programs;
- Employment or consultation;
- Support from a project sponsor;
- Position on advisory board or board of directors or other types of management relationships;
- Multiple affiliations;
- Financial relationships, for example, equity ownership or investment interest;
- Intellectual property rights (e.g. patents, copyrights, and royalties from such rights);
- Holdings of spouse and/or children that may have a financial interest in the work.

In addition, interests that go beyond financial interests and compensation (non-financial interests) that may be important to readers should be disclosed. These may include but are not limited to personal relationships or competing interests directly or indirectly tied to this research, professional interests, or personal beliefs that may influence your research. The corresponding author collects the conflict-of-interest disclosure forms from all authors. (Please note that each author should complete a disclosure form).

## 10 Research involving humans and/or animals

### 10.1 Statement of human rights

When reporting studies that involve human participants, authors should include a statement that the studies have been approved by an appropriate institutional and/or national research ethics committee and have been performed in accordance with the ethical standards as laid down and updated in the 2013 Declaration of Helsinki (7<sup>th</sup> revision) and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration or comparable standards, the authors must explain the reasons for their approach, and demonstrate that the independent ethics committee or institutional review board explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study. The following statements should be included in the text before the References section: Ethical approval: “All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.” For retrospective studies, please add the following sentence: “For this type of study formal consent is not required.”

### 10.2 Statement on the welfare of animals

The welfare of animals used for research must be respected. When reporting experiments on animals, authors should indicate whether the international, national, and/or institutional guidelines for the care and use of animals have been followed and that the studies have been approved by a research ethics committee at the institution or practice at which the studies were conducted (where such a committee exists). For studies with animals, the following statement should be included in the text before the References section: Ethical approval: “All applicable international, national, and/or institutional guidelines for the care and use of animals were followed.” If applicable (where such a committee exists): “All procedures performed in studies involving animals were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institution or practice at which the studies were conducted.” If articles do not contain studies with human participants or animals by any of the authors, please select one of the following statements: “This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors.” “This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any of the authors.” “This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.”

## 11 Informed consent

All individuals have individual rights that are not to be infringed. Individual participants in studies have, for example, the right to decide what happens to the (identifiable) personal data gathered, to what they have said during a study or an interview, as well as to any photograph that was taken. Hence it is important that all participants gave their informed consent in writing prior to inclusion in the study. Identifying details (names, dates of birth, identity numbers, and other information) of the participants that were studied should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, and genetic profiles unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the participant (or parent or guardian if the participant is incapable) gave written informed consent for publication. Complete anonymity is difficult to achieve in some cases, and informed consent should be obtained if there is any doubt. For example, masking the eye region in photographs of participants is inadequate protection of anonymity. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic profiles, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning. The following statement should be included: Informed consent: “Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.” If identifying information about participants is available in the article, the following statement should be included: “Additional informed consent was obtained from all individual participants for whom identifying information is included in this article.”

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## 14 Ethical consideration

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