

Writing a Case Report Worth Publishing

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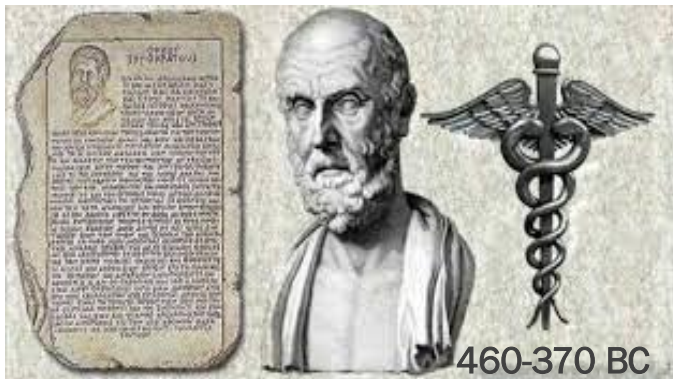
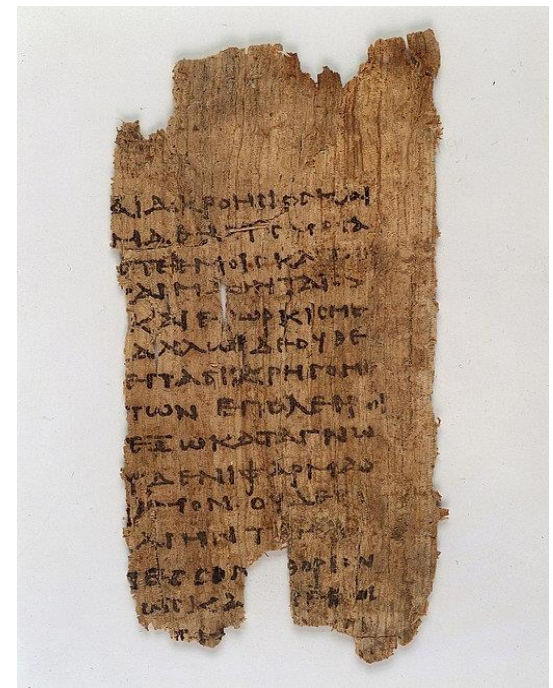
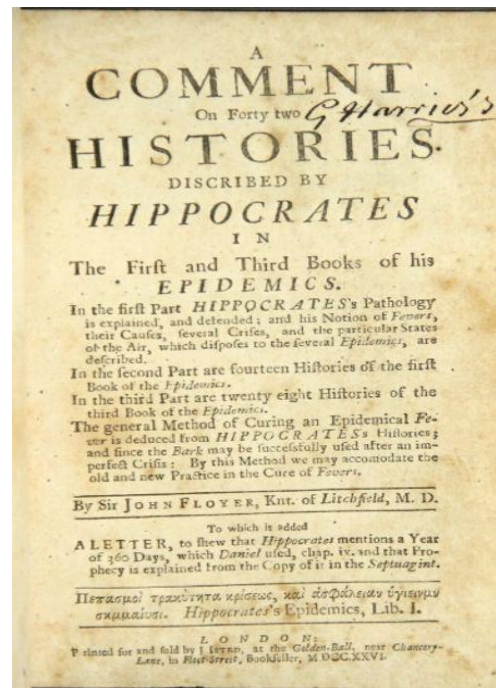


AGENDA

- Benefits of a case report
- What makes a case report publishable?
- Obtaining a patient consent
- Stages of writing a case report- focus on Abstract elements
- Writing guidelines for case reports
- Tips on submission for publication & resources



Management of Breast Cancer has been described by ancient Egyptians in the “Edwin Smith Papyrus” 2500-3000BCE



Case Reports are Ancient...

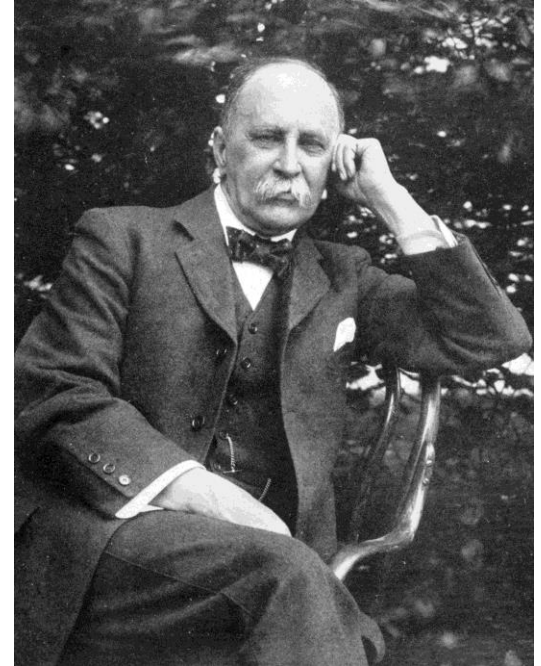


Identifying an Appropriate Case

“An appropriate case for a case report is a common manifestation of an unusual disorder or an uncommon manifestation of a common disorder.”

-Sr. William Osler

The Father of Modern Medicine



Guidelines for Writing a Case Report?



CARE Checklist (2013) of information to include when writing a case report

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Topic	Item	Checklist item description	Reported on Page
Title	1	The words "case report" should be in the title along with the area of focus	
Key Words	2	2 to 5 key words that identify areas covered in this case report.	
Abstract	3a	Introduction—What is unique about this case? What does it add to the medical literature?	
	3b	The main symptoms of the patient and the important clinical findings	
	3c	The main diagnoses, therapeutics interventions, and outcomes	
	3d	Conclusion—What are the main "take-away" lessons from this case?	
Introduction	4	One or two paragraphs summarizing why this case is unique with references	
Patient Information	5a	De-identified demographic information and other patient specific information	
	5b	Main concerns and symptoms of the patient	
	5c	Medical, family, and psychosocial history including relevant genetic information (also see timeline)	
	5d	Relevant past interventions and their outcomes	
Clinical Findings	6	Describe the relevant physical examination (PE) and other significant clinical findings.	
Timeline	7	Important information from the patient's history organized as a timeline	
Diagnostic Assessment	8a	Diagnostic methods (such as PE, laboratory testing, imaging, surveys)	
	8b	Diagnostic challenges (such as access, financial, or cultural)	
	8c	Diagnostic reasoning including other diagnoses considered	
	8d	Prognostic characteristics (such as staging in oncology) where applicable	
Therapeutic Intervention	9a	Types of intervention (such as pharmacologic, surgical, preventive, self-care)	
	9b	Administration of intervention (such as dosage, strength, duration)	
	9c	Changes in intervention (with rationale)	
Follow-up and Outcomes	10a	Clinician and patient-assessed outcomes (when appropriate)	
	10b	Important follow-up diagnostic and other test results	
	10c	Intervention adherence and tolerability (How was this assessed?)	
	10d	Adverse and unanticipated events	
Discussion	11a	Discussion of the strengths and limitations in your approach to this case	
	11b	Discussion of the relevant medical literature	
	11c	The rationale for conclusions (including assessment of possible causes)	
	11d	The primary "take-away" lessons of this case report	
Patient Perspective	12	When appropriate the patient should share their perspective on the treatments they received	
Informed Consent	13	Did the patient give informed consent? Please provide if requested	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

"The CARE guidelines help increase the completeness, accuracy, and transparency of published case reports"

CARE guidelines

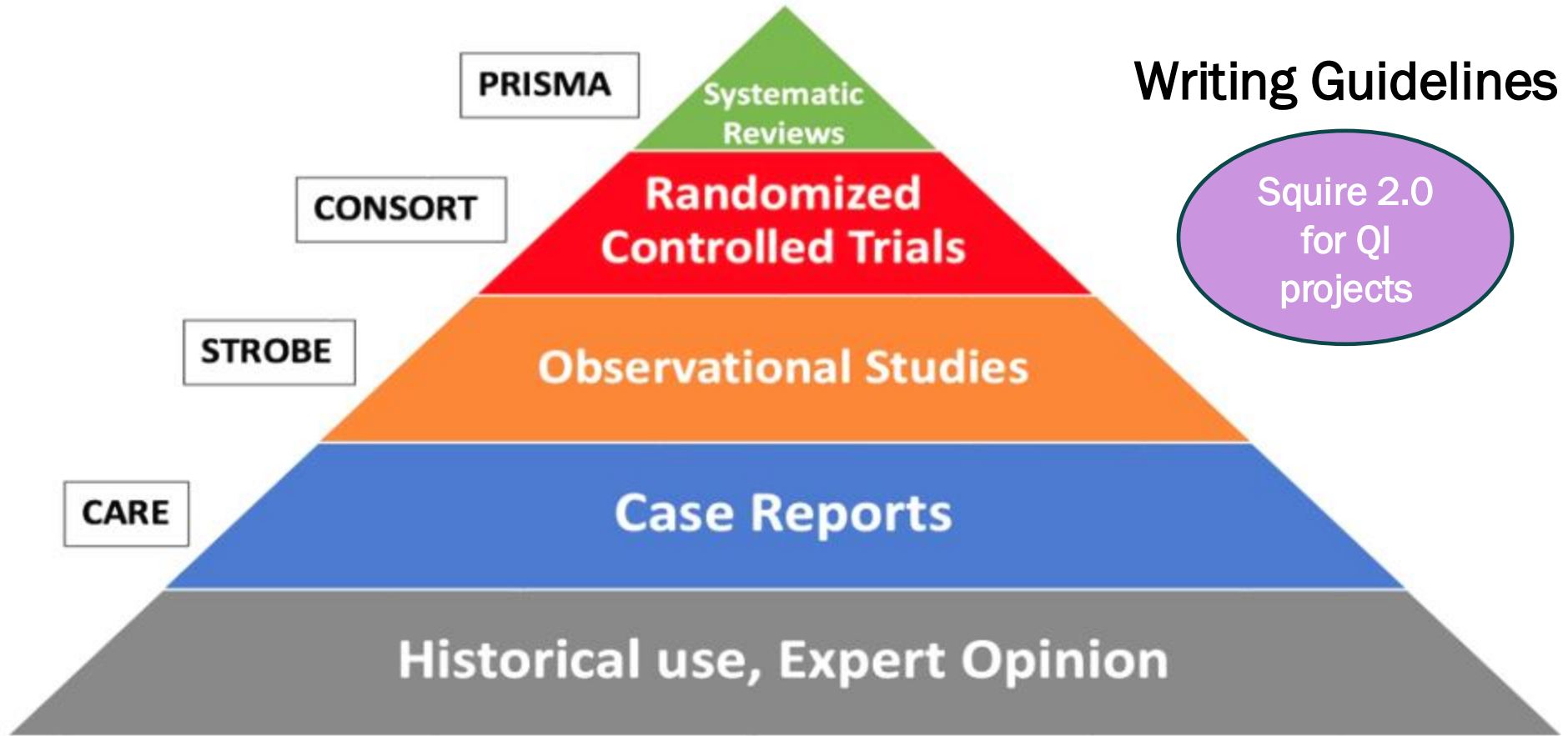


Brief reports providing scientific observations on:

- unique presentation & clinical diagnosis
- novel management or therapeutic
- unexpected outcome or adverse effects



Writing Guidelines



Main Reasons to Publish a Case Report



Scholarly project –
meeting requirements



Entry point in research
& precursor to larger
studies



Practice research
writing skills &
documenting the case



Complex or rare cases
of valuable learning
points



Personal satisfaction &
enhancing CV



Altruistic intentions:
benefiting the world!



Case Reports Stakeholders

- Patients
- Clinicians
- Researchers
- Hospitals & clinics
- Educators
- Policy makers
- Healthcare industry representatives



Preparation for Writing a Case Report

- Is the case unique?
- Is the case publishable?
- Appropriate journal identification
- Obtainable patient consent

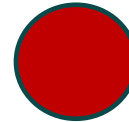


Is this Case Publishable?



- Unique Case
- New disease or syndrome
- Unexpected association
- New insight into disease
- Critical clinical findings

- New Rx
- Rare or novel adverse reaction or side effect
- Unusual harm or complication from Rx

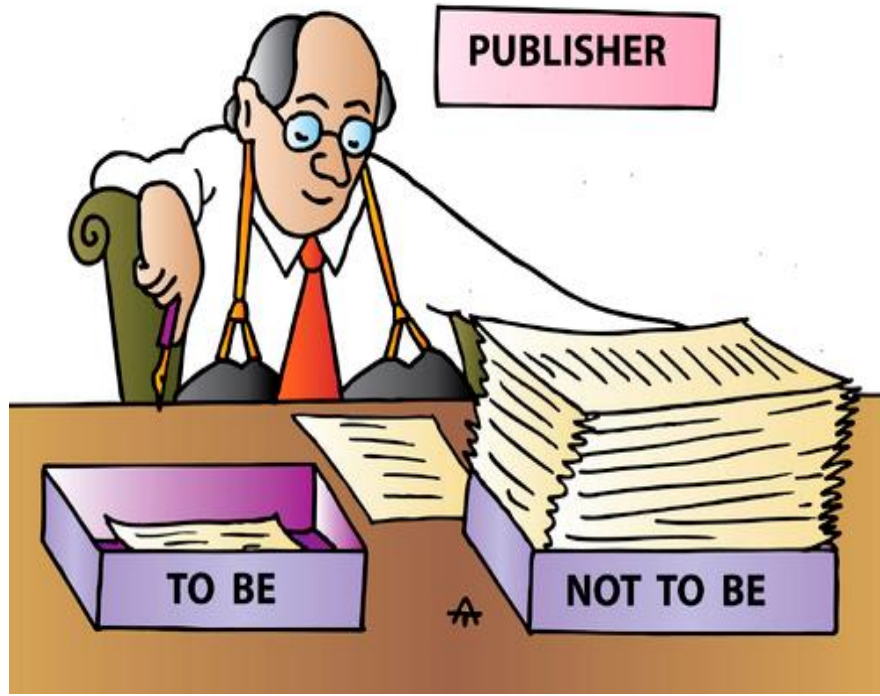


Oh!! That's a great case!!!
Go for it!

- New procedure or RX modality
- Unusual prognosis



Rule of Thumb for Publishing

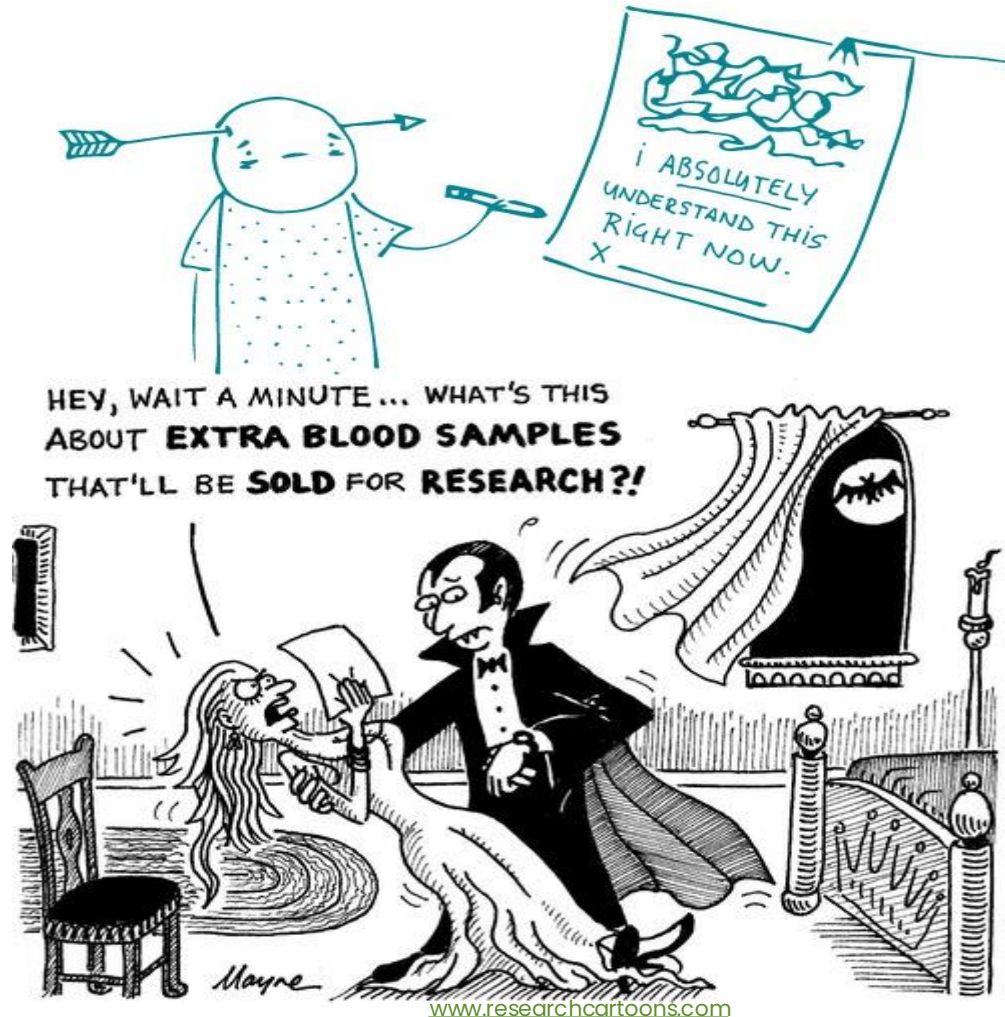


- A case that has been reported 4-6 times or less is appropriate for publication
- If case has unique and unusual features, barely found in the literature, then, it is necessary to publish



Obtaining Patient Consent

- Required written consent from competent patient or legal representative
- No coercion, misinformation, or deceit
- Protect identification of patient
- Follow HIPPA guidelines



Obtaining Consent from the Dead

- Get consent from closest kin or legal rep
- If the deceased kin or rep cannot be reached
 - Write case report but de-identify any personal health information (PHI)



- Name
- DOB (no exact age, state age-group instead e.g., “in his 60s”)
- Geographic location & race- avoid mentioning geographic area or hospital affiliation



Preparatory Steps for Writing a Case Report

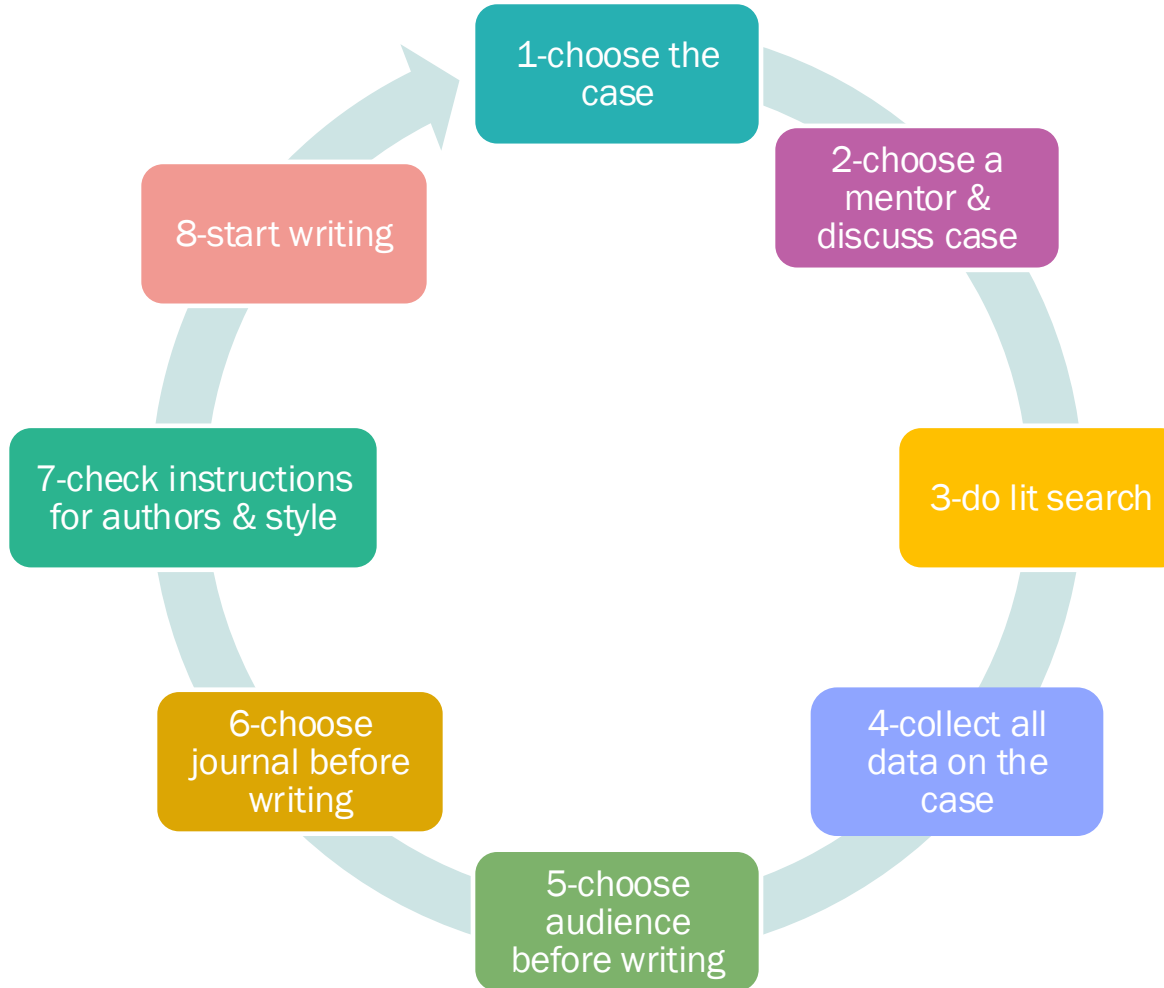
- Identify a journal
- Review “Instruction for Authors”
- Read several case reports from selected journals to gain insight on structure, composition, detail, etc.



Instructions for Authors



Stages of Writing Case Reports



Content of a Clinical Case Report

- Introduction
- Case Description
- Discussion [Conclusions]
- Literature review
- Summary/conclusion
- References

For Abstracts

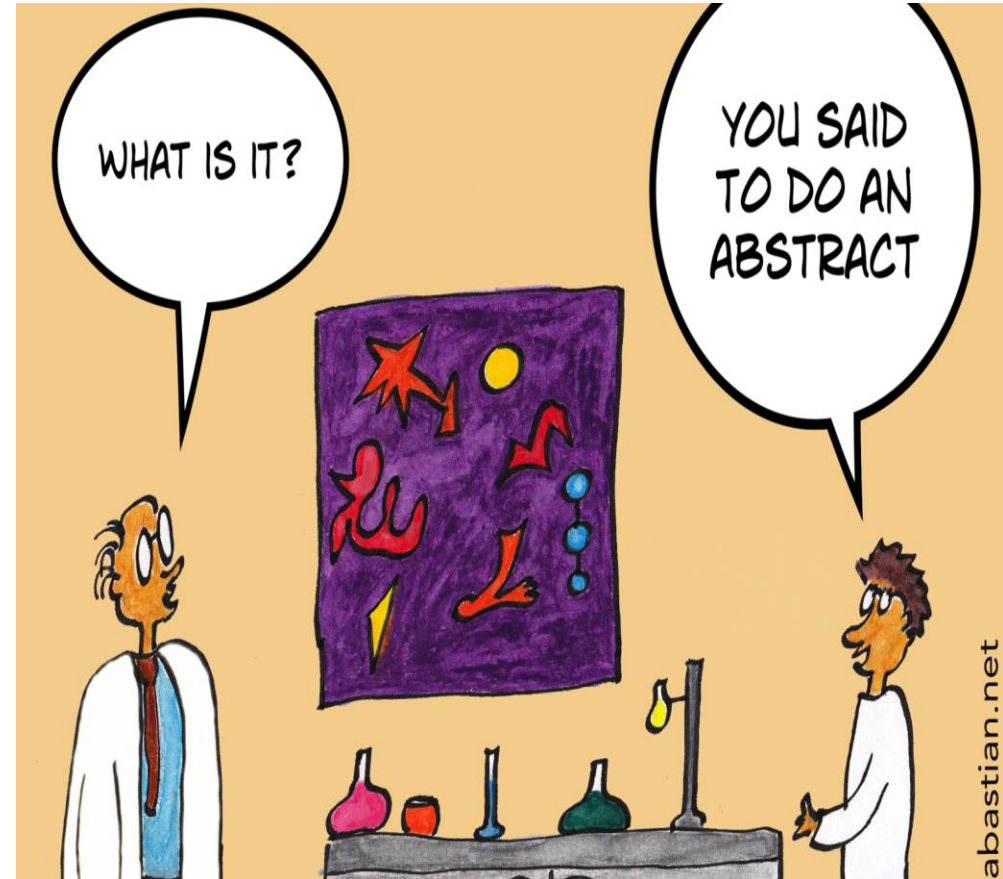
Abstract of a clinical vignette

A brief and vivid illustration or snapshot of the case that discloses the condition progressively by using one clinical clue after another



Case Report Abstract = Clinical Vignette

- ~250-350 words
- Introduction: Epi, significance, rationale
- Case Description:
 - Presenting concerns
 - Diagnosis
 - Interventions
 - Outcomes
- Discussion/Conclusion: learning points



“Title” of a Case Report

- Informative, communicate salient points
- Include “searchable” terms, keywords
- Not too declarative or vague, a bit mysterious is ok
- The words “Case Report” should be in title

Terms related to Title:

Unusual or Atypical Presentation (symptoms, causes); Rare, Unusual, Uncommon Case, Manifestation, Finding; Challenging Diagnosis; Complications; Treatment Management.



“Introduction”

- Brief overview of the larger problem addressed by the case
- Epidemiology & significance based on lit.
- Clinical Importance, what is special about the case- **the hook!**
- **Recommended:** reviewing introductions of similar Case Reports



Fictional Example- “Introduction/Background”

“XYZ” is a life-threatening condition characterized by... affecting 1% of “subpopulation.” Despite the absence of a definitive cure for this condition, prompt diagnosis and timely surgical intervention have been correlated with a 36% survival rate. We report/present a case of.... (or this case report shows how using....)

SAMPLE

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“Case Description”

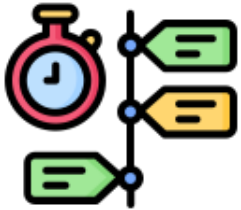
Description of the patient, presenting condition

Current medical, social & family Hx

Physical exam & relevant test results

Initial Dx, Rx, Clinical course

Expected/actual outcome; prognosis; & F/U plan



“Case Description”

Succinct with only important items

Provide values for unusual lab or imaging tests

Few tables/images if needed or allowed



“You tested positive for being negative.”



“Case Description” *Selecting Relevant Facts*



Not allowed to hide facts that run counter your main conclusion



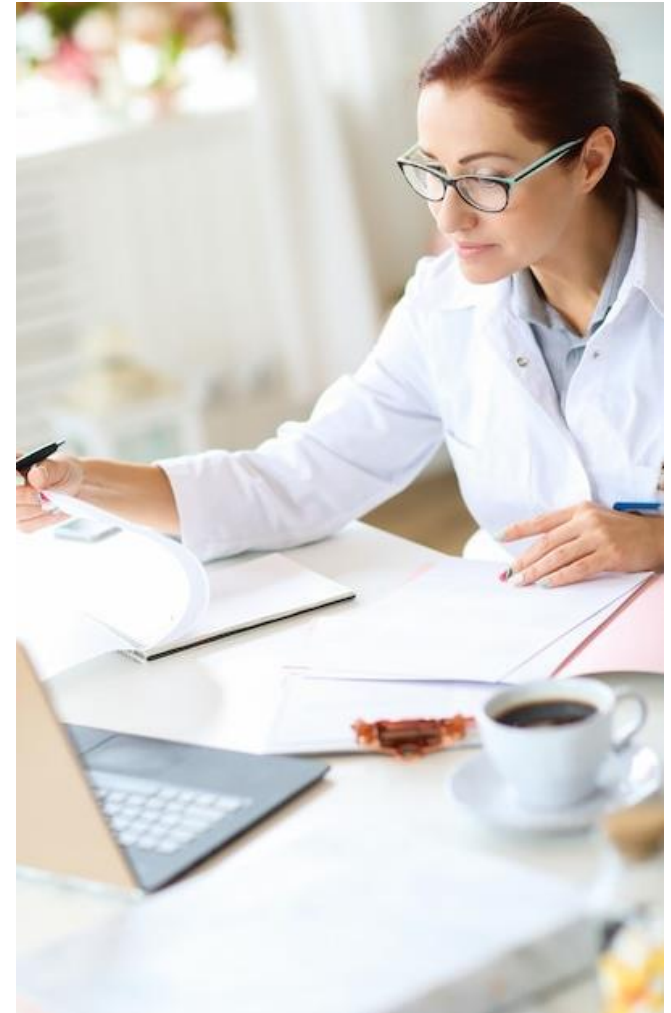
Do not emphasize irrelevant facts. Only Pertinent +/- labs & findings



Differential diagnosis walk



Include 1-2 images to keep readers engaged- if space allowed (use arrows)



Patient demographics (age, gender, nationality, etc.)	“A 35-year-old man”; “a 1-month-old infant”; “a 12-year-old Somali girl,” etc.
Presenting symptoms	“Demonstrated typical signs and symptoms of Huntington’s Disease”; “presented to the hospital with severe chest pain”; “experienced a burning sensation due to swollen leg muscles”
History of problems/symptoms	“Reported a long history of asthma”; “had a family history of colon cancer on the maternal side”; “reported that inflammation had begun one year prior”
Diagnoses	“Based on the characteristic appearance of the cutaneous lesions, a diagnosis of granuloma annulare was made”; “a clinical diagnosis of chronic respiratory disease was made”; “intestinal lesions were consistent with severe Crohn’s Disease”
Treatment	“The patient was immediately intubated and antitubercular therapy was initiated”; “treatment was initiated with low-dose corticosteroids, anticoagulants, and vasodilators”
Procedures	“Following kidney biopsy, renal cysts were excised laparoscopically”; “the patient underwent three skin grafts”; “an emergency arteriogram showed smooth segmental narrowing and bilateral vasospasm”
Complications/challenges	“Additional history revealed that he had been ingesting ergotamine preparations for a number of years to relieve chronic muscle pain”; “laparoscopic access to the duodenum was inhibited by intra-abdominal fat”
Outcomes	“patient was asymptomatic on subsequent visits,” “although scapular swelling subsided, she continued to report severe back pain for the following month,” “...resulting in significant improvement with the administration of parenteral corticosteroids.”

“Discussion”



Most important
section

Significance of
case against the
literature
Compare/contrast

What should
colleagues learn?

Diagnosis,
Management,
Outcome,
Prognosis

Clinical
implications



“Discussion” Section



Evaluate case for accuracy, validity & uniqueness



Compare & contrast case with published literature



Derive new knowledge



Summarize essential features



Draw recommendations or clinical implications



“Conclusion”

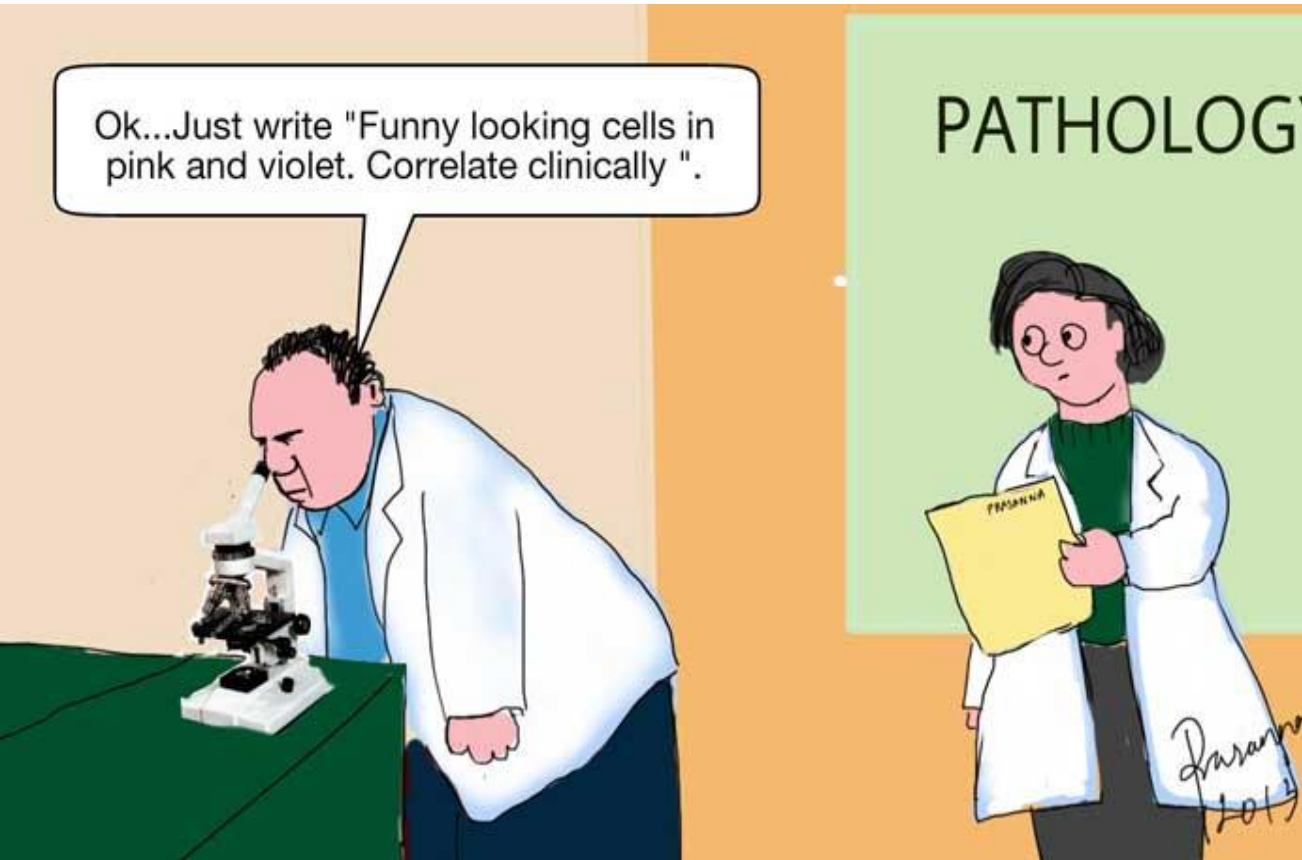
(1-2 sentences)—Support for your argument from literature

“Take home message” Summarize clinical impact, or implications & suggestions for the clinical practice.

Suggest precautions or interesting topics for future research.



Collaboration With Other Consultants



- Radiologists & Pathologists' input adds credibility
- Residents/students: Faculty & subspecialists add value



Submission and Publishing

Journal Requirements:

- Formatting
 - Layout of legends & figures
 - Tables, figures, illustrations, imaging
- Cover letter



Writing the Draft...

BMJ Case Reports

Submission template for full cases

- All case reports MUST be submitted online using this Word template <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bmjcasereports>
 - You will be asked for more detailed information on submission where you can also upload images, multimedia files, etc
 - Further details are available in the Instructions for authors <http://casereports.bmj.com/instructions-for-authors>
- You must have **signed informed consent** from patients (or relatives/guardians) before submitting to BMJ Case Reports. Please anonymise the patient's details as much as possible, eg, specific ages, occupations. Consent forms are available in several languages <http://casereports.bmj.com/instructions-for-authors/consentform.pdf>
- You or your institution must be a Fellow of BMJ Case Reports in order to submit. Fellows can submit as many cases as they like, access all the published material, and re-use any published material for personal use and teaching without further permission.
 - For more information on rates and how to purchase your fellowship visit <http://casereports.bmj.com/site/about/becomeafellow.xhtml>
 - Contact your librarian or head of department to see if your institution already has a Fellowship

TITLE OF CASE
Something sensible that really tells you what the case is about
SUMMARY <i>Up to 150 words summarising the case presentation and outcome (this will be freely available online)</i>
We really need a good flavour of the case from this. Emphasise the learning points.
BACKGROUND <i>Why you think this case is important – why did you write it up?</i>
Why is this of interest to our readers? Is this a prevalent health problem? Is there a clear message?
CASE PRESENTATION <i>Presenting features, medical/social/family history</i>
This is the story of what happened to the patient. How did they present? What is the relevant history? Why is this relevant? Explain your findings and how they influenced your management. A brief summary of relevant clinical guidelines in appropriate here. Did you have to make an exception? Did you have to adapt the guidelines?
Do not use abbreviations for diseases or investigations.
Read the case presentation back to yourself. Is there a natural flow from presentation to discharge and follow-up? Are all decisions explained?
Do not be afraid to write about complications. They are universal and learning from each other's experience is key in Medicine. Do discuss these with clarity so that all findings and management decisions are obvious. The audience are not reading to approve or disapprove but need to be in a position to make sense of the story. The discussion of pitfalls is the single

01

Write first draft, check for spelling & grammar

02

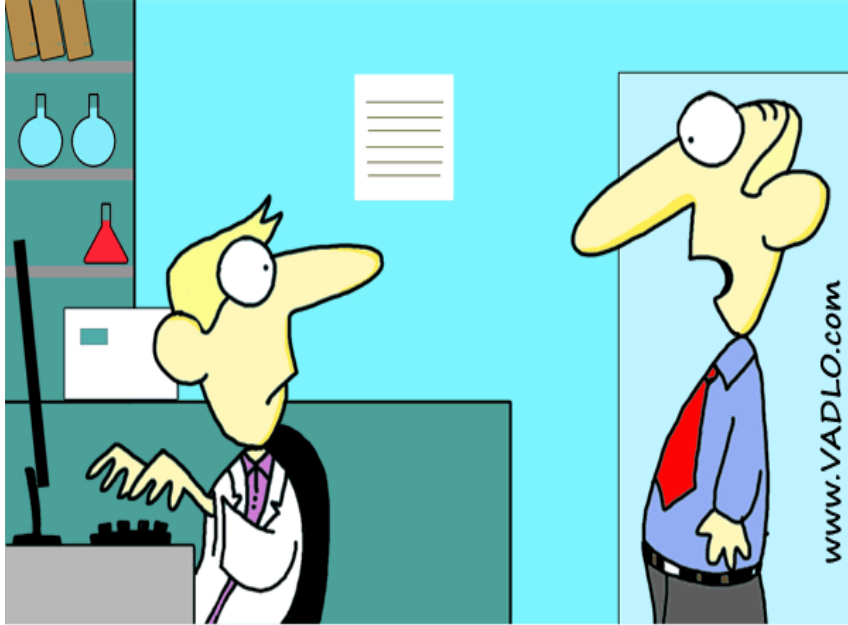
Allow co-authors & others to proof-read

03

Make final version for submission



Draft “Hints & Tips”



“You should spend the next week typing down names of all co-authors on your paper.”

Authorship: only those who contributed to writing; main authors & consultants- discuss authorship early on.



Abbreviations: Define first

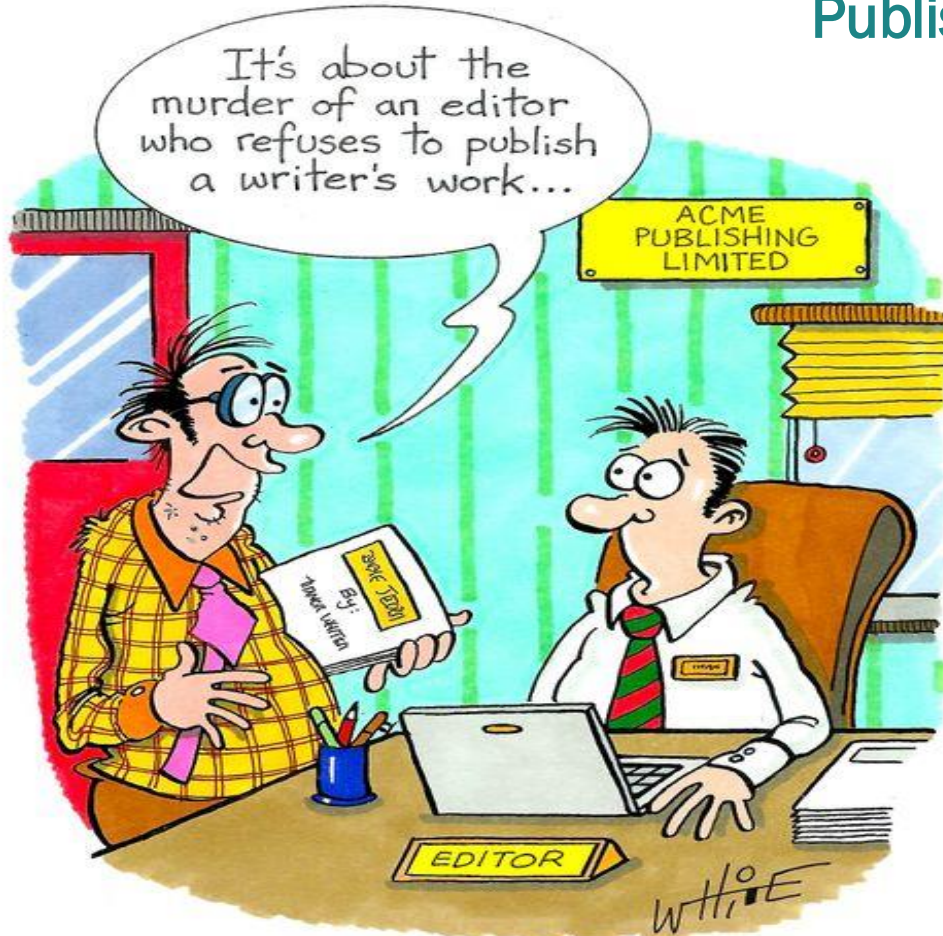


References: ~12; style

Check for
Plagiarism



Publishing in Leading Medical Journals?



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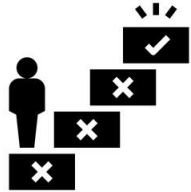


- Prefer prospective & methodologically-sound studies
- Majority accepts high-quality case reports



If, at First, You Don't Succeed...

- Try, try again!



- With sufficient persistence, you can publish!



Case Report Journals

- Numerous respected, peer-reviewed medical journals specialize in case reports; many are open access
- Example: *Journal of Medical Case Reports*, *American Journal of Case Reports*, *Oxford Medical Case Reports*, *BMJ*, *American Journal of Medicine*, *Journal of Internal Medicine*, *Journal of Hospital Medicine*, and *International Journal of -- Case Reports*; *Case Reports in...* (list medical librarian)



Great website
with resources



Journals that explicitly accept case reports

Note: indexing is listed in the following alphabetical order – MEDLINE, PMC, Scopus (only the first applicable index in this order is listed; the journal may be indexed in other databases as well).

Journal Title	Publisher	Society or Sponsoring Organization	Indexing (NLM, Scopus)	Impact Factor
A&A Case Reports	Wolters Kluwer	International Anesthesia and Analgesia Research Society	Scopus	
AACE Clinical Case Reports	American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists	American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists	PMC	
ACG Case Reports Journal	Wolters Kluwer	American College of Gastroenterology	PMC	
Acta Radiologica Open	SAGE		PMC	
AHRQ Web Morbidity and Mortality	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	US Federal Healthcare Agency	MEDLINE	
AJP Reports	Thieme		PMC	
AJSP Reviews & Reports	Wolters Kluwer			
Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine	InnoVision Health Media		MEDLINE	✓
American Journal of Case Reports	International Scientific Information		MEDLINE	
American Journal of Ophthalmology Case Reports	Elsevier		PMC	
Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia	Sociedade Brasileira de Dermatologia		MEDLINE	✓
APSP Journal of Case Reports	Association of Paediatric Surgeons of Pakistan	Association of Paediatric Surgeons of Pakistan		
Autopsy and Case Reports	Hospital Universitário of the University of São Paulo		PMC	
BJR Case Reports	British Institute of Radiology		PMC	
BMJ Case Reports	BMJ Publishing Group		MEDLINE	
Case Reports in Anesthesiology	Hindawi		PMC	
Case Reports in Cardiology	Hindawi		PMC	
Case Reports in Clinical Medicine	Scientific Research Publishing			
Case Reports in Critical Care	Hindawi		PMC	
Case Reports in Dermatological Medicine	Hindawi		PMC	
Case Reports in Dermatology	Karger		PMC	
Case Reports in Emergency Medicine	Hindawi		PMC	
Case Reports in Endocrinology	Hindawi		PMC	
Case Reports in Gastroenterology	Karger		PMC	

Check their
complete list:

<https://static1.square-space.com/static/5d9a8d505d066103652cfefb/t/60358658d5c5456125260e53/1614120536974/Journals+that+Accept+Case+Reports.pdf>



New journals for publishing medical case reports

Katherine G. Akers, PhD

Table 1
Case report journals

Great list for all Journals
accepting case reports

Journal title	Publisher/Society	Year launched	Open access	Questionable publishing practices	PubMed indexed
A&A Case Reports	Wolters Kluwer Health/International Anesthesia Research Society	2013	No	No	No
AACE Clinical Case Reports	American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists	2015	Yes	No	No
ACG Case Reports Journal	American College of Gastroenterology	2013	Yes	No	Yes
AJP Reports	Thieme Medical Publishers	2011	Yes	No	No
American Journal of Cancer Case Reports	Ivy Union Publishing	2013	Yes	Yes	No
American Journal of Case Reports	International Scientific Information	2001	Yes	No	Yes
American Journal of Medical Case Reports	Science and Education Publishing	2013	Yes	Yes	No
Aperito Journal of Case Reports: Clinical	Aperito Online Publishing	2015	Yes	Yes	No
APSP Journal of Case Reports	EL-MED-Pub Publishers/Association of Paediatric Surgeons of Pakistan	2010	Yes	No	Yes
Austin Cardio & Cardiovascular Case Reports	Austin Publishing Group	2015	Yes	Yes	No
Austin Gynecology Case Reports	Austin Publishing Group	2015	Yes	Yes	No
Austin Journal of Clinical Case Reports	Austin Publishing Group	2014	Yes	Yes	No
Austin Oncology Case Reports	Austin Publishing Group	2015	Yes	Yes	No
Autopsy and Case Reports	Hospital Universitario of the University of San Paulo	2011	Yes	No	No
BJR Case Reports	British Institute of Radiology	2015	Yes	No	No
BMJ Case Reports	BMJ Publishing Group	2008	No	No	Yes
Case Reports in Anesthesiology	Hindawi Publishing	2011	Yes	No	Yes
Case Reports in Cardiology	Hindawi Publishing	2011	Yes	No	Yes
Case Reports in Clinical Medicine	Scientific Research Publishing	2012	Yes	Yes	No
Case Reports in Clinical Pathology	Sciedu Press	2014	Yes	Yes	No



OPEN ACCESS

GOLD ROUTE



GREEN ROUTE



HYBRID ROUTE

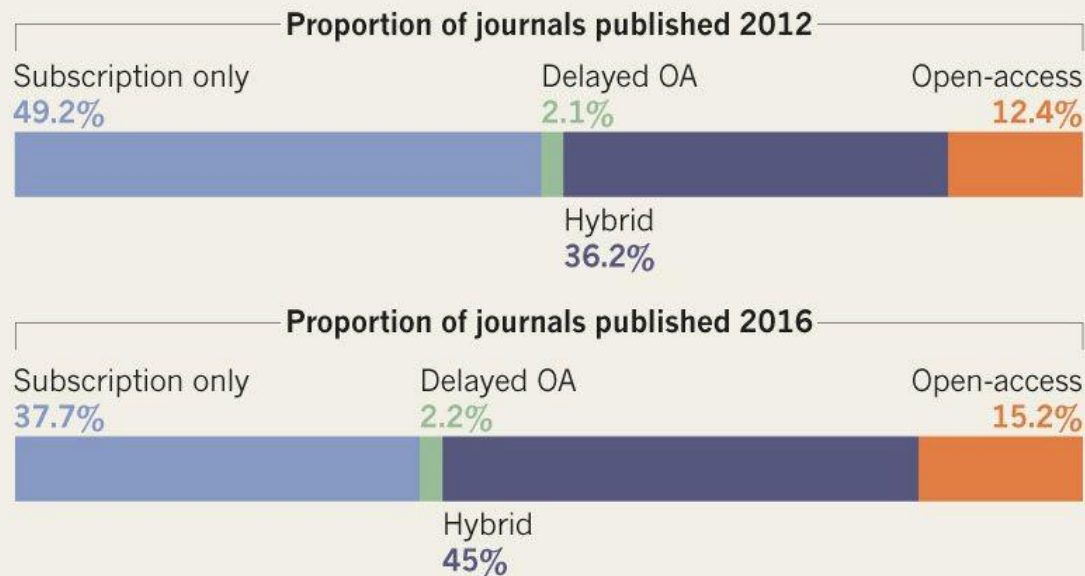


Impact Factor of Medical Journals

Name of the journal	Impact factor
New England Journal of Medicine	72.40
The Lancet	47.83
Journal American Medical Association	44.40
Nature	40.13
British Medical Journal	20.78
Annals of Internal Medicine	17.13
British Journal of Anaesthesia	6.23
American Journal of Transplantation	6.16
British Journal of Surgery	5.89
American Journal of Surgery	2.61
Journal of Nepal Medical Association	0.04
Journal of Nepal Health Research Council	Not available
Kathmandu university Medical Journal	Not available
Nepal Medical College Journal	Not available

PUBLISHING MODELS

Worldwide, the proportion of subscription-only journals* shrank between 2012 and 2016, giving way to more open-access (OA) and hybrid journals.



*From Scopus database. Hybrid journals are subscription titles that allow authors to make individual papers open for a fee.

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Be Careful of Predatory Journals!



BEALL'S LIST of
Open **PREDATORY**
access
PUBLISHERS



To check,
go here



<https://journalsearches.com/predatory-journals.php>



F/U After Manuscript Submission

- Most editors will acknowledge receipt of a manuscript, will assign a #
- Remember: you cannot submit to a 2nd Journal while awaiting a decision from the 1st Journal
- Typically, most journals tell you of decision within 6 weeks
- If not contacted in 3 months, contact journal directly
- Most CR will require 1-2 revisions after submission



EDITOR
NOT A MAGICIAN
BUT I UNDERSTAND
YOUR CONFUSION

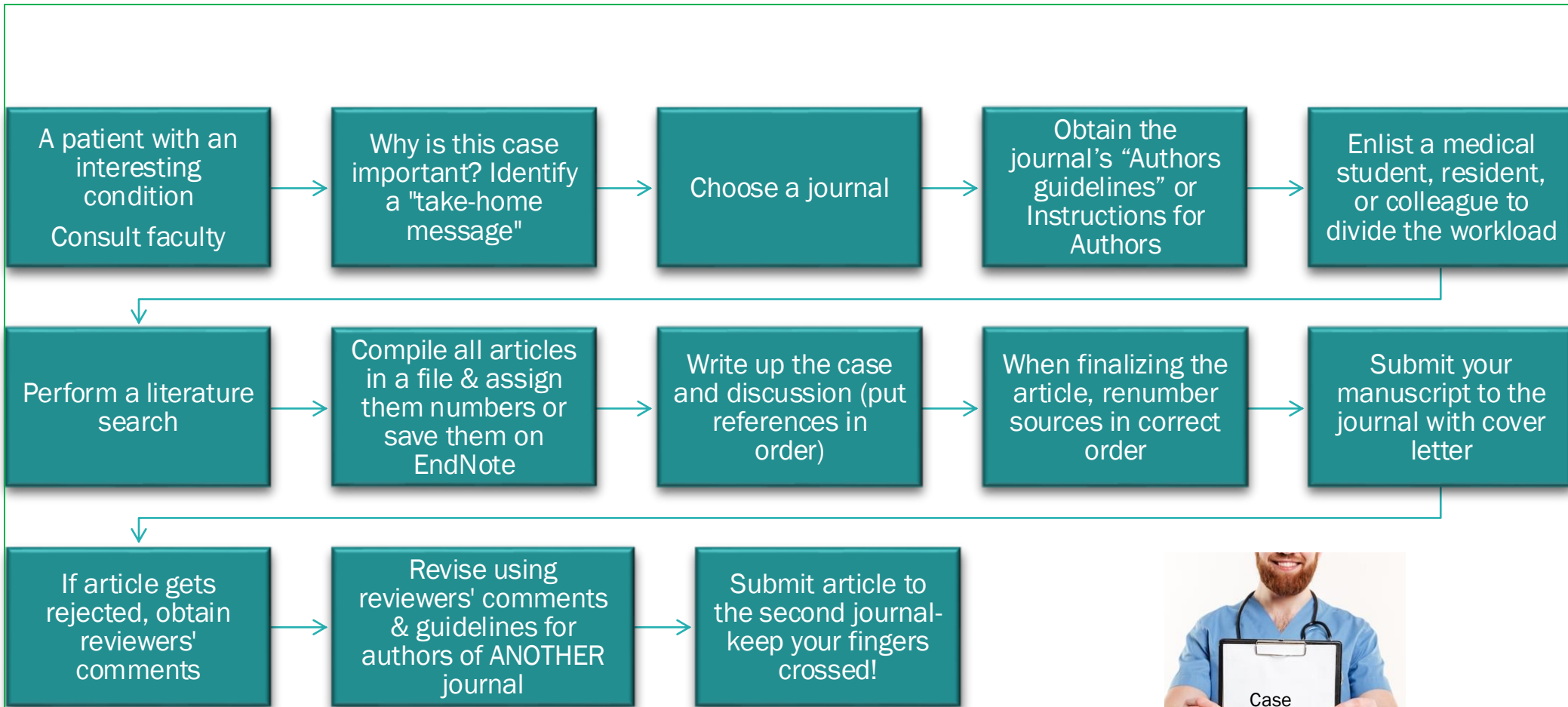


Resubmission After Rejection

- Read reviewer's comments carefully (mostly experts in the field)
- Revise manuscript to incorporate reviewer's comments
- Most Case Reports will get accepted within 3-4 submission attempts
- Apply to lesser well-known journals



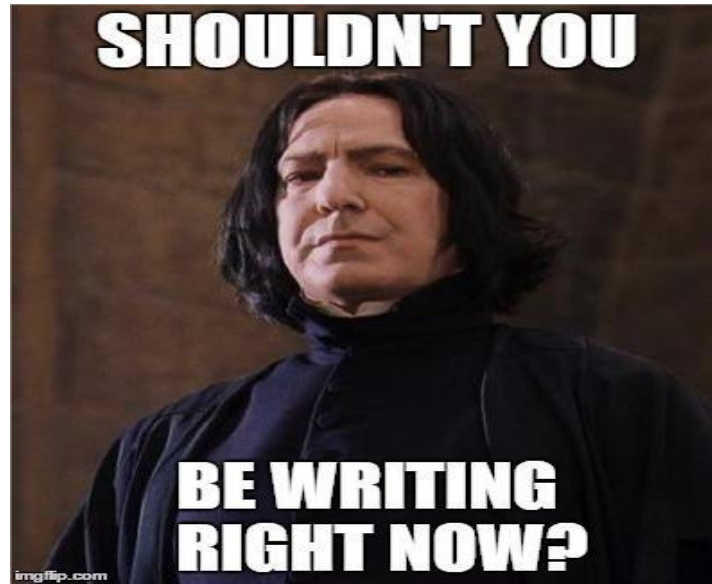
Recap- 13 Steps to Publishing a Case Report



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**Spartan Medical
Research Journal**
Research at Michigan State University
College of Osteopathic Medicine

THANK YOU!



Questions?
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SMRJ

SPARTAN MEDICAL RESEARCH JOURNAL

Open Access
PubMed Indexed
Peer-reviewed
<https://smrj.scholasticahq.com>

Currently accepting
case reports



Statewide Campus System
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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY