

The Bone & Joint Journal (BJJ)
Preparing a manuscript for submission
Checklist

Abstract

- ☐ Use structured concise prose with sub-titles: Aims, Methods, Results, Conclusion
- ☐ Provide a take home message, including up to three bullet points summing up the clinical relevance of the paper in the context of the existing literature
- ☐ Provide a clear hypothesis and/or a statement of the study aims and objectives

Introduction

- ☐ Provide background information and a description of the clinical problem
- ☐ Place the proposed study and choice of study design in the context of the previous literature, e.g. this is the first randomized controlled trial in this area
- ☐ Give a clear statement of the study aims and objectives at the end of the Introduction

Patients and Methods

- ☐ Clearly document the study design and any prior registration details (i.e. registration with clinicaltrials.gov or ISRCTN)
- ☐ Provide details of Research Ethics approval or why this was not required
- ☐ Describe how the population/patients were recruited/selected to take part in the study, and how many were included
- ☐ How was the study size derived? Give full details of the sample size calculation if performed.
- ☐ How were the patients/subjects chosen? Provide full details of the inclusion/exclusion criteria
- ☐ If a randomized study, describe the process of randomization in detail
- ☐ Provide full details of the intervention if there was one
- ☐ Provide full details of the comparison if there was one
- ☐ Provide full details of the outcomes to be reported. Were they validated? Clearly identify the primary outcome measure, if there was one
- ☐ For clinical outcome studies, state who collected the outcome data and if they were blind to treatment allocation
- ☐ For other study designs, clearly identify the source data and the timeframes for those data
- ☐ Identify the unit of measurement, e.g. patient, limb, or joint
- ☐ Where appropriate, provide information regarding bilateral cases and how they were managed (e.g. treatment allocation) within the study, where relevant

Statistical analysis

- ☐ State all the statistical tests and to which data they were applied. Include references where appropriate; particularly where the method is nonstandard (e.g. beyond t-tests, linear or logistic regression etc).
- ☐ Report exact p values for all statistical tests and includes details of the statistical method that generated the p-value (e.g. not $p < 0.05$, but $p = 0.025$ from a t-test)
- ☐ State the level of significance used for all tests (e.g. significance was set at the 5% level)
- ☐ Provide details of all primary and secondary analyses

- ☐ Justify model/analysis assumptions; e.g. independence between data points, normal distribution of outcome
- ☐ Give details of how missing data were handled (e.g. complete-case analysis was used or missing data were imputed)
- ☐ Provide details of the statistical software used for analysis, and any nonstandard modules/packages/add-ins used; e.g. StatsSoft version 1.0 was used for all analysis (add reference) with package Regmod (add reference)

Results

- ☐ Always provide absolute numbers when reporting percentages; e.g. 50% (20/40)
- ☐ Provide means and standard deviations (and ranges), and medians and interquartile ranges (upper and lower quartiles) as appropriate for descriptive summary analyses
- ☐ Both p-values and 95% confidence intervals (credible intervals) should be provided where inference statistics are reported
- ☐ Present results clearly and in a logical order; i.e. from the simplest descriptive statistics to the most complex analyses
- ☐ Check that numbers/outcomes/tests/follow-up all match between text and any tables/figures
- ☐ Axis should be clearly labelled on figures and legends provided for all tables and figures
- ☐ Provide an interpretation for results of reported analyses; e.g. if odds ratios or regression coefficients are reported explain what they mean, and how they can be interpreted
- ☐ Units should be provided for all results

Discussion

- ☐ State if / how strongly your results support your conclusion
- ☐ State how your results fit into the current knowledge/existing literature
- ☐ Discuss your study strengths and limitations
- ☐ Will your results change clinical practice? If so, state how

References

- ☐ Are they relevant and up-to-date?
- ☐ Reduce citation bias wherever possible
- ☐ Do not include personal communications as references

Tables

- ☐ Include units in all tables
- ☐ Ensure the legends are comprehensive and clearly state what the table shows

Figures

- ☐ Provide a maximum of ten (counting a, b, c as separate figures)
- ☐ Ensure legends are comprehensive and clearly state what the figure shows. State what any additional notes or lettering represent
- ☐ Ensure that all axis labels have been applied to all charts or graphs
- ☐ Provide details of stains when presenting histology
- ☐ Magnification given if presenting histology
- ☐ Submit individually. Please split composite images into their separate components
- ☐ Please ensure that any radiographs, photographs or histology are submitted as high-quality (minimum 300 dpi (pixels/inch) resolution) originals (as a tiff/JPEG). Where possible,

radiographs should be supplied unmarked except where explanation is necessary, i.e. without extraneous additions such as dates

- ☐ Graphs should be presented in an editable format (i.e. EPS, Excel or Powerpoint) on a plain background, without gridlines (the background for flow charts should also be plain). Where editable versions cannot be provided, please ensure Arial, or similar, font (8 point) has been used, where possible
- ☐ Graphs with a single line should be provided in black and white; colour can be used if this is absolutely required for interpretation
- ☐ Confidence intervals to be added to graphs if they are included in the paper

General

- ☐ Ensure the manuscript is no longer than 4,000 words
- ☐ Use of appropriate reporting guidelines in addition to the items stated above e.g. CONSORT statement, CHEERS statement (for health economics), STROBE, PRISMA, SEARCHED...
- ☐ Ensure that all abbreviations have been spelt out at first use
- ☐ The manuscript has been blinded and any institutional or author names removed