

EDITORIAL POLICIES

AIMS AND SCOPE

The Portuguese Journal of Pediatrics (PJP), founded in 1938, is the official journal of the Portuguese Society of Pediatrics (SPP). The PJP is a scientific double-blind peer-reviewed quarterly journal published online in English. The journal aims to publish high-quality articles on clinical and experimental pediatrics and maternal-fetal conditions. This journal publishes a variety of articles including original articles, review articles, case series, case reports, images in Pediatrics, editorials, letters to the editor, guidelines, perspectives, and other content to improve clinical practice.

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Manuscripts submitted to the PJP must comply with the norms of the Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals, created by the International Committee of Medical Journals Editors (ICMJE), updated in December 2021, available online in <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>.

The PJP's review and publication process respect the Editorial Policy Statements issued by the Council of Science Editors (https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/wp-content/uploads/CSE-White-Paper_2018-update-050618.pdf).

The Portuguese Journal of Pediatrics has adopted its current name in 2018 and is the continuation of the former Acta Pediátrica Portuguesa.

EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

It is SPP's responsibility to appoint and dismiss the Editorial Board of the PJP and establish a contract at the time of their appointment, which includes the Editorial Board's rights, duties, authority, and conflict resolution mechanisms. In addition, mutually agreed indicators are used to evaluate the performance of the appointed Editorial Board.

The PJP adopts the definition of editorial freedom of the ICMJE provided by the World Association of Medical Editors, stating that the Editor-in-Chief assumes complete authority over the journal's editorial content as well as the publication of its content. The SPP, as proprietor of the PJP, does not interfere in the process of evaluating, selecting, programming, or editing any manuscript, either directly or by maintaining an atmosphere that can strongly influence the decisions made. The editor bases the editorial decisions on the quality and relevance of the articles submitted and their importance to the readers of the PJP, not on any potential business implications for the journal. The editor is also free to express critical but responsible views on all aspects of medicine without fear of reprisals.

REVENUE SOURCES

The journal is supported by the Portuguese Society of Pediatrics and commercial advertising. There are no article processing charges, no submission fees, no subscriptions, or other organizational support.

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Editors in Chief: David Lito and Luis Pereira-da-Silva

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PUBLISHING BEST PRACTICES

Authorship and responsibility

As mentioned in the ICMJE Requirements, authorship refers to a substantial contribution to the manuscript. Therefore, each author needs to specify his/her contribution to the work in the Authorship Responsibility Statement.

Individual contributions statement signed by each author

Authors must meet the four criteria for authorship:

1. Have a direct and substantial intellectual contribution to the conception or design of the article;
2. Participate in the analysis and interpretation of data;
3. Participate in the drafting of the manuscript, critical review of the content, and approval of the final version;
4. Acknowledge their accountability for the accuracy and integrity of the work.

Contributors who do not meet these four authorship criteria but have only contributed to the study or manuscript should be recognized in the Acknowledgements section, and their contributions should be disclosed.

Each manuscript must have a 'corresponding author'. However, all the authors should have participated in taking public responsibility for the content and authorship credit.

The corresponding author must obtain written permission from everyone mentioned in the Acknowledgments section.

Participation in the provision of funds, data collection, or the general supervision of the workgroup, by itself, does not entitle one to authorship.

Group authorship

When a large group of authors performs a work, this group must decide who the authors listed in manuscripts are before starting the work.

All group members listed as authors should meet all the four authorship criteria, including the approval of the manuscript's final version, and should take public responsibility for the totality of the work on behalf of other co-authors. In addition, all group members must individually complete the declaration of conflicts of interest form.

When authors publish on behalf of a group, the corresponding author must specify the group name. Other co-authors and collaborators should be listed as such in an appendix.

Changes in authorship

Authors must determine the authorship order and resolve any disagreements before submitting the manuscript. Changes in authorship (whether in order or number of authors) should be discussed and approved by all the authors. The authors should explain by e-mail any requests for changes in authorship after the initial submission and before publication.

After submission, any change in authorship must be approved in writing by all the authors. Changes made to authorship or the authors' order are not allowed after the manuscript is accepted.

Role of the corresponding author

The corresponding author communicates with the journal during the submission, peer review, and publication process on behalf of all co-authors. The corresponding author is also responsible for ensuring compliance with all the journal's administrative requirements (including providing authorship details, ethics committee approval, conflict of interest, and informed consent forms).

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REVIEW, ACCEPTANCE, AND PUBLICATION

Peer-review process

All research articles, and most other article types, published in the PJP go through a peer-review process. Reviewers must respect confidentiality and are not allowed to reveal details of any manuscript in the peer-review process. If reviewers wish to involve a colleague in the review process, they should first obtain permission from the editor.

The primary acceptance criteria are quality, clarity, and originality. Manuscripts should be written in a clear, concise, and direct style. In addition, they must not have been published or submitted for publication elsewhere.

If a manuscript does not comply with the instructions for authors, it can be rejected before being reviewed.

Letters to the Editor or Editorials are evaluated by the Editorial Board but may require an external review.

After evaluating the manuscript, it can be:

- A) Accepted without changes
- B) Accepted but contingent on minor modifications
- C) Revaluated after major modifications
- D) Rejected

The manuscript is initially reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief and can be rejected at this stage without being sent to the reviewers. However, final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editor-In-Chief, who reserves the right to refuse any material that s/he deems inappropriate for publication.

Upon receipt of the manuscript, the Editor-in-Chief sends it to an Associate Editor, who then asks for at least two revisions from two different reviewers if the manuscript complies with the authors' instructions and the editorial policy.

Within 30 days, the reviewers should respond to the Editor-in-Chief and provide their comments on the manuscript suggesting acceptance, review, or rejection of the work. Within 10 days, the Editorial Board decides to: accept the manuscript without modifications; send the reviewers' comments to authors for manuscript review; or reject the work.

When changes are suggested, authors have 30 days (that may be extended at the request of the authors) to submit a revised version of the manuscript, incorporating the reviewers and the Editorial Board's comments. The authors then need to answer all the questions and send a modified version of the manuscript to the journal, with the inserted amendments highlighted differently.

The Associate Editor has 10 days to decide on the new version: reject or accept it, or refer it to one or more reviewers for a new appraisal.

In case of acceptance, the corresponding author will be informed in any of the mentioned phases.

Although editors and proofreaders make all efforts to ensure the scientific and technical quality of the manuscripts, the ultimate quality of the content (including accuracy and precision of the observations and opinions expressed) is the sole responsibility of the authors.

Corrections

The PJP publishes revisions, amendments, or retractions to a previously published article provided that errors or omissions identified after publication affect the interpretation of the data or information. After publication, further changes can only be made in the form of an erratum.

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Retractions

The reviewers and editors assume that the authors report their works based on honest observations. However, if substantial doubt arises about the honesty or integrity of work, either submitted or published, the editor informs the authors of the concern and seeks clarification from the author's sponsoring body or employing authority. Consequently, if a published article is found to be fraudulent, the PJP will print a retraction. If this method of investigation does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, the editor may choose to conduct his/ her own research and may choose to publish an expression of concern about the conduct or integrity of the work.

GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSION OF STUDIES

The PJP recommends the guidelines for publication of the EQUATOR network (<http://www.equator-network.org>), namely the CONSORT declarations and their extensions (randomized trials, <http://www.consort-statement.org>), STROBE (observational studies, <https://www.strobe-statement.org>), STARD (diagnostic/prognostic studies, <http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/stard>), PRISMA (systematic reviews and meta-analyses, <http://prisma-statement.org>), SQUIRE (quality improvement studies, <http://www.squire-statement.org>) and CARE (case reports, <http://www.care-statement.org>).

Statistical reporting should be done according to the Statistical Analysis and Methods in the Published Literature (SAMPL Guidelines, <http://www.equator-network.org/2013/02/11/sampl-guidelines-for-statistical-reporting>).

DUPLICATE SUBMISSION AND PUBLICATION

The PJP does not accept materials that are simultaneously submitted to or are already published in another journal, except for published abstracts of presentations at scientific meetings.

The PJP endorses the ICMJE policy regarding overlapping publications (<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/publishing-and-editorial-issues/overlapping-publications.html>).

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Whether on purpose or not, plagiarism is a severe violation of publication ethics. We define plagiarism as the reproduction of another work with at least 25% similarity and without citation. The PJP uses specific software for similarity checks.

If plagiarism is detected before the acceptance, the author will be allowed to reformulate the manuscript. However, the authors will be responsible for legal issues that may arise after publication (due to plagiarism) and lead to the retraction of the published manuscript.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The authors must ensure that the study submitted complies with the ethical and legal principles in both the research and publication phases, including the guidelines of the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki revised in 2013 (<https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving>).

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[human-subjects/](#)), the ICMJE (www.icmje.org) and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (<http://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines>).

Ethical Committee Approval

When applicable, the authors must provide evidence of approval by the ethics committee(s) of the involved institution(s). This information must be included in the appropriate section of the manuscript.

Informed Consent

Before publication, written informed consent should be obtained from the participants (or parent/guardian) in the studies involving patients or volunteers. The authors are responsible for obtaining patients' informed consent for any reported clinical and biological data, published photographs, and videos. This information must be stated in the appropriate section of the manuscript.

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The PJP follows the General Data Protection Regulation (Law No. 58/2019 of 8 August). Accordingly, any non-consented information related to patients, including photographs, identification, or hospital record numbers, is not accepted, even after taking appropriate measures to preserve anonymity. Furthermore, names, initials, or other forms of identification must be removed from photos or other images.

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Studies involving animal experiments must be conducted following the guidelines defined in the "Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals" by the National Institute of Health. All animal studies should also comply with the ARRIVE (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) guidelines. The authors should also comply with the national legislation that regulates this type of study (Decree-Law No. 113/2013 of 7 August 2013). The manuscript should clearly include a declaration of compliance with the above-mentioned guidelines.

The PJP holds the right to reject any manuscript based on ethical misconduct in human or animal studies.

LANGUAGE

The manuscripts submitted to the PJP must be written in English, except for the abstract which should be translated into Portuguese.

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This journal utilizes the [LOCKSS](#) system to create a distributed file system among participating libraries and create permanent journal archives for preservation and restoration.

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Publication in the PJP involves no article processing charges (no submission fees even for the publication of colour images).

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Public trust in the scientific process and the credibility of published articles depends partly on how conflicts of interest are handled during the planning, implementation, writing, peer review, editing, and publication of scientific work.

A conflict of interest exists when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (such as patients' welfare or the validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (financial gain).

Financial relationships are the most easily identifiable type of conflicts of interest and are the most likely to undermine the credibility of the journal, the authors, and science itself. However, conflicts can occur for other reasons, such as personal relationships or rivalries, academic competition, and intellectual beliefs. Authors should avoid entering into agreements with study sponsors, both for-profit and nonprofit, that interfere with authors' access to all of the study's data or with their ability to analyze and interpret the data and to prepare and publish manuscripts independently when and where they choose.

All participants in the peer-review and publication process must consider their potential conflicts of interest when fulfilling their roles and must disclose all relationships that could be perceived as potential conflicts of interest.

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Therefore, all authors must complete and submit the ICMJE Form for Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest available at: <http://www.icmje.org/disclosure-of-interest/>. This information will not influence the editorial decision; it will be kept confidential during the manuscript review and published if the article is accepted. If there are no conflicts of interest, the authors must state this.

This information should be provided in the section entitled "Declaration of Conflicts of Interest", which follows the "Acknowledgements" section and precedes the "References". The absence of any conflict of interest must also be declared as well.

Editors, members of the Editorial Board, and journal staff as authors

The PJP considers original papers submitted by editors, Editorial Board members, and journal staff, but they are not involved in editorial decisions about their scholarly work. After submission, an editorial assistant verifies if any member of the PJP team is an author. In this case, the members are excluded from publication decisions. The PJP has two Editors-in-Chief, and one of them (without authorship responsibility) is assigned to coordinate and oversee the review process.

CLINICAL TRIALS

The PJP supports initiatives that contribute to better disclosure of clinical trial results. This includes prospective registration of clinical trials in public databases. Following the ICMJE recommendations, the PJP requires the registration of all clinical trials included in manuscripts submitted for publication in this journal.

ICMJE adopts the World Health Organization's definition of the clinical trial: "any study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects on health outcomes". This definition includes Phase I to Phase IV trials. In addition, ICMJE defines health-related interventions as "any intervention used to modify a biomedical or health-related outcome" and health-related outcomes as "any biomedical or health-related measures obtained in patients or participants".

Moreover, registration in a public clinical trials database is mandatory for the data obtained from clinical trials, following the recommendations of the ICMJE. The trials must be registered before or at the start of the patient recruitment period. The trial registration number (TRN) and date should be included in the last line of the manuscript abstract.

Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the investigator's discretion) do not require registration.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA

The PJP strongly suggests that all datasets on which the manuscript's conclusions rely should be available to readers. Raw data on which the manuscript is based can be requested during the review process or up to ten years after publication. Therefore, we encourage authors to ensure that their datasets are either deposited in publicly available repositories (where available and appropriate) or presented in the main manuscript or additional supporting files in machine-readable formats (such as spreadsheets rather than PDF files) whenever possible.

The PJP requires an "Availability of Data" section at the end of each manuscript. For drug or medical device trials, this section must include at least the relevant data of each patient, properly anonymized, available upon justified request to the authors.

This statement is suggested to have a format similar to the following:

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"Availability of data: individual patient data [and/or] complete dataset [and/or] technical appendix [and/or] statistical analysis specifications are available in [DOI] [with free access/but the following restrictions apply] [from the corresponding author]. Subjects gave informed consent for the availability of data [either informed consent was not obtained from the participants, but the data are anonymized, and the risk of identification is low [or] informed consent was not obtained. Still, the potential benefits of the availability of these data justify the potential risks, as...]"

If data are not available, the statement should mention: "Availability of data: additional data are not publicly available." This statement does not apply to clinical trials of drugs or medical devices.

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Any appeal on a decision or complaint during peer-review, or post-publication, must be submitted in writing to the Editor-in-Chief. All cases are handled in line with COPE guidelines.

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