

Reproductive Medicine and Biology

Instructions for authors

Revised April 2015

Aims and scope

Reproductive Medicine and Biology (RMB) is the official English journal of the Japan Society for Reproductive Medicine, the Japan Society of Fertilization and Implantation, and the Japan Society of Andrology, and publishes original research articles that report new findings or concepts in all aspects of reproductive phenomena in all kinds of mammals. Papers in any of the following fields will be considered: andrology, endocrinology, oncology, immunology, genetics, function of gonads and genital tracts, erectile dysfunction, gametogenesis, function of accessory sex organs, fertilization, embryogenesis, embryo culture, embryo manipulation, pregnancy, implantation, ontogenesis, infectious disease, contraception, infertility treatment, surgery, and ethics and social issues, at the biological, biochemical, biophysical, molecular biological, analytically morphological, and clinical levels. Reports on techniques applicable to the above fields are also considered. Original Articles, Research Notes, and Case Reports will be accepted, but not preliminary reports. Review and Mini-review articles are usually submitted upon invitation by the Editors, but the Editorial Board welcomes voluntary contributions. A review should be a focused, brief treatment of a contemporary development in a single area, and should be no longer than 10 printed pages.

Peer review and acceptance

The acceptance criteria for all papers are the quality and originality of the research and its significance to our readership. Except where otherwise stated, manuscripts are peer-reviewed by two anonymous reviewers and the Executive Editor. Manuscripts are accepted whether or not the author is a member of the Japan Society for Reproductive Medicine, the Japan Society of Fertilization and Implantation, or the Japan Society of Andrology. The Editorial Board reserves the right to refuse any material for publication and advises authors to retain copies of submitted manuscripts and correspondence, as material cannot be returned. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editorial Board.

Prerequisites for publication

Legal requirements

To ensure and preserve scientific integrity, all manuscripts submitted to the Journal are scrutinized by the plagiarism detection service CrossCheck. Journal policy prohibits use of plagiarized text, including self-plagiarism (i.e., using your own text that has previously been published).

Submission of a manuscript implies: that the work described has not been published before; that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere in any language and 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 claims for compensation.

The three items listed below must be submitted via Editorial Manager at the same time you submit your manuscript. Necessary forms can be found at <http://www.springer.com/12522>.

(i) Cover letter

A copy of the cover letter form, which certifies that this article has been approved by a suitably constituted ethics committee and conforms to the provisions of the Declaration of Helsinki, must be submitted to the journal's editorial office by uploading it as a PDF file. Also see the instructions below for integrity of research and reporting.

(ii) Certification form

A copy of the certification form, which certifies that the manuscript has not been published or submitted before and all authors have contributed and are in agreement with the content of the manuscript, must be submitted to the journal's editorial office by uploading it as a PDF file.

(iii) Conflict of interest (COI) disclosure form

See below instruction on conflict of interest.

Manuscript submission and preparation

Manuscripts should follow the style of the Vancouver agreement detailed in the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals," as shown in *Ann Intern Med* 1997;126:36–47 and at www.annals.org/cgi/content/full/126/1/36.

English language editing

Authors whose native language is not English are required to seek the assistance of language services or of a colleague who is a native English speaker and is familiar with the field of work before the submission.

The following organizations provide language services to non-native speakers of English. Please note that the journal does not endorse, nor does it have any direct involvement with, any of the services listed; this information is provided solely for the convenience of authors for the journal.

editage <http://www.editage.jp/> (English, Japanese, Korean, Chinese and German Website)

Edanz group Ltd. <http://edanzediting.com/> (English, Japanese and Chinese Website).

Copyright 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.

How to submit

Authors should submit their manuscripts online via Editorial Manager. Please connect directly to the site and upload all of your manuscript files at <http://www.editorialmanager.com/remb> following the instructions given there (see also the end of this instructions for authors for more information).

Parts of the manuscript

Manuscripts should be presented in the following order:

(i) Title page

The title page should include:

- The name(s) of the author(s)
- A concise and informative title
- The affiliation(s) and address(es) of the author(s)
- The e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers of the corresponding author

(ii) Abstract

Please provide a structured abstract of 200 words, which should be divided into the following sections:

- Purpose (stating the main purposes and research question addressed in the work)
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions

(iii) Key words

Five key words (for indexing) should be supplied below the abstract, in alphabetical order, and should be taken from those recommended by the US National Library of Medicine's Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) browser list (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/meshhome.html>).

(iv) Text

Manuscripts should be written on ISO A4 size with double spacing throughout, including table and figure legends.

Authors should use subheadings to divide the sections of their manuscript:

- Introduction: This section should include sufficient background information to set the work in context. The aims of the manuscript should be clearly stated. The introduction should contain neither findings nor conclusions.
- Materials and Method: This should be concise but provide sufficient detail to allow the work to be repeated by others. The source of material should be given in detail, where possible.
- Results: Results should be presented in a logical sequence in relation to the text, tables, and figures; repetitive presentation of the same data in different forms should be avoided. The results should not contain material appropriate to the Discussion.
- Discussion: This should consider the results in relation to any hypotheses advanced in the introduction and place the study in the context of other work.
- Acknowledgments: See below.
- Disclosures: See below.
- References: See below.

Text formatting

For submission of Word documents:

- Use a normal, plain font (e.g., 10-point Times Roman) for text.
- Use the automatic page-numbering function to number the pages. (Numbering of lines in the margin is requested to facilitate review. Consult the "Help" menu for "Insert Line Number" on word-processing programs.)
- Do not use field functions.
- Use tab stops or other commands for indents, not the space bar.
- Use the table function, not spreadsheets, to create tables.
- Use the equation editor or MathType for equations. (Note: If you use Word 2007, do not create equations with the default equation editor but use MathType instead.)

Heading levels

Please use no more than three levels of displayed headings.

Abbreviations and acronyms

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

SI units, numbers

Always use internationally accepted signs and symbols for units (SI units).

Terminology

Generic names of drugs and pesticides are preferred; if trade names are used, the generic name should be given at first mention.

Equations

Please use the standard mathematical notation for formulae, symbols, etc.:

- Italic for single letters that denote mathematical constants, variables, and unknown quantities.
- Roman/upright for numerals, operators, and punctuation, and commonly defined functions or abbreviations, e.g., cos, det, e or exp, lim, log, max, min, sin, tan, d (for derivative).
- Bold for vectors, tensors, and matrices.
- Footnotes to the text are not allowed, and any such material should be incorporated into the text as parenthetical matter.

(v) Acknowledgments

The sources of financial grants and other funding should be acknowledged, including a frank declaration of the authors' commercial or industrial links and affiliations. The contributions of colleagues or institutions should also be acknowledged. Thanks to anonymous reviewers are not allowed.

(vi) Disclosures

Disclosures should include “conflict of interest”, “human rights statements and informed consent”, and “animal studies” subsections. The author can refer to the sample text in the instruction of integrity of research and reporting shown below.

(vii) References

The list of References should include only works that are cited in the text and that have been published or accepted for publication. Personal communications and unpublished works should be mentioned only in the text, within parentheses. Do not use footnotes or endnotes as a substitute for a reference list.

Citation in text

Citations in the text should be identified by *numbers in square brackets*.

Some examples:

1. Negotiation research spans many disciplines [3].
2. This result was later contradicted by Becker and Seligman [5].
3. This effect has been widely studied [1–3, 7].

List style

Journal article

1. Bavister B, Yanagimachi R. The effect of sperm extract and energy sources on the motility and acrosome reaction of hamster spermatozoa in vitro. *Biol Reprod*.1982; 16: 228–31.

2. O'Mahony S, Rose SL, Chilvers AJ, Ballinger JR, Solanki CK, Barber RW, et al. Finding an optimal method for imaging lymphatic vessels of the upper limb. *Eur J Nucl Med Mol Imaging*. 2004; 31: 555–63.

Book

3. Lombardi J. *Comparative vertebrate reproduction*. Heidelberg: Springer; 1999.

Book chapter

4. Brinster RL. Mammalian embryo metabolism. In: Blandau RJ, editor. *The biology of the blastocyst*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1971. p. 303–18.

Article by DOI

5. Slifka MK, Whitton JL. Clinical implications of dysregulated cytokine production. *J Mol Med* 2000. doi: 10.1007/s001090000086.

Online document

6. Male Infertility Best Practice Policy Committee. Report on varicocele and infertility. American Urological Association. 2001. <http://auanet.org>. Accessed 5 Jun 2008.

Always use the standard abbreviation of a journal's name according to the ISSN List of Title Word Abbreviations. (See <http://www.issn.org/en/node/344>)

(viii) Tables

Each table should be completed with title and footnotes.

- All tables are to be numbered using Arabic numerals.
- Tables should always be cited in the text in consecutive numerical order.
- For each table, please supply a table title. The table title should explain clearly and concisely 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 title.
- Statistical measures such as SD or SEM should be identified in the headings. The table and its legend/footnotes should be understandable without reference to the text.
- Footnotes to tables should be indicated by superscript lowercase letters (or asterisks for significance values and other statistical data) and included beneath the table body.

(ix) Figures and figure legends

- All figures are to be numbered using Arabic numerals.
- Figure parts should be denoted by lowercase letters. If illustrations are supplied with uppercase labeling, lowercase letters will still be used in the figure legends and citations.
- Figures should always be cited in the text in consecutive numerical order.
- For each figure, please supply a figure legend.
- Make sure to identify in the legend all elements found in the figure.
- Identify any previously published material by giving the original source in the form of a reference at the end of the legend.
- Photographs need to be cropped sufficiently to prevent a subject's being recognized, or an eye bar should be used.
- For more information about preparing your illustrations, please follow the link (<http://www.springer.com/12522>) to the artwork guidelines.
- The publisher reserves the right to reduce or enlarge figures.

(x) ESM

If electronic supplementary material (ESM) is submitted, it will be published as received from the author in the online version only.

ESM may consist of:

- information that cannot be printed: animations, video clips, sound recordings
- information that is more convenient in electronic form: sequences, spectral data, etc.
- large original data, e.g., additional tables, illustrations, etc.

When any ESM is supplied, the text must make specific mention of the material as a citation, similar to that of figures and tables (e.g., “. . . as shown in Animation 3.”).

For details on formats and other information, please follow the link (<http://www.springer.com/12522>) to the specific instructions for electronic supplementary material.

Integrity of research and reporting

Ethical standards

Reproductive Medicine and Biology has adopted the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts (URM) established by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (<http://www.icmje.org/>). The editors reserve the right to reject manuscripts that do not comply with the below-mentioned requirements. The author will be held responsible for false statements or failure to fulfill the below-mentioned requirements.

Conflict of interest (COI)

When authors submit a manuscript, they are responsible for disclosing all financial and personal relationships that might bias their work. To prevent ambiguity, authors must state explicitly whether potential conflicts do or do not exist. Each author must complete and submit a COI disclosure form, and the corresponding author should submit all the COI disclosure forms when submitting a manuscript. This form can be obtained from <http://www.springer.com/journal/12522/>. Each author must indicate whether or not they have a financial relationship with any organization that sponsored the research, or is associated with any product or procedure that is mentioned in the article. For each source of funds, both the research funder and the grant number should be given. The form must be submitted to the journal's editorial office by uploading it as a PDF file. Conflict of interest statements should be included in the Disclosures section before the References in all manuscripts. The statements should list each author separately by name. Sample wording is as follows:

Conflict of interest: *John Smith declares that he has no conflict of interest. Paula Taylor has received research grants from Drug Company A. Mike Schultz has received a speaker honorarium from Drug Company B and owns stock in Drug Company C.*

If multiple authors declare no conflict, this can be done in one sentence:

Conflict of interest: *John Smith, Paula Taylor, and Mike Schultz declare that they have no conflict of interest.*

Human rights statements and informed consent

For studies with human subjects, include the following statement in the Disclosures section:

Human rights statements and informed consent: *All procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible committee on human experimentation (institutional and national) and with the Helsinki Declaration of 1964 and its later amendments. Informed consent was obtained from all patients for being included in the study.*

If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration, the authors must explain the rationale for their approach, and demonstrate that the institutional review body explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study. Identifying information of patients of human subjects, including names, initials, addresses, admission dates, hospital numbers, or any other data that might identify patients should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, or pedigrees unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the patient (or parent/guardian) gives written informed consent for publication. If any identifying information about patients is included in the article, the following sentence should also be included:

– *Additional informed consent was obtained from all patients for which identifying information is included in this article.*

Animal studies

For studies with animals, include the following sentence in the Disclosures section:

Animal studies: *All institutional and national guidelines for the care and use of laboratory animals were followed.*

For articles that do not contain studies with human or animal subjects performed by any of the authors, while it is not absolutely necessary, we recommend to include the following sentence, just to make sure that readers are aware that there are no ethical issues with human or animal subjects:

Human/Animal rights: *This article does not contain any studies with human or animal subjects performed by any of the authors.*

After acceptance

During the production phase the following issues have to be clarified:

(i) Open Choice

In addition to the normal publication process (whereby an article is submitted to the journal and access to that article is granted to customers who have purchased a subscription), Springer now provides an alternative publishing option: Springer Open Choice. A Springer Open Choice article receives all the benefits of a regular subscription-based article, but in addition is made available publicly through Springer's online platform SpringerLink. We regret that Springer Open Choice cannot be ordered for published articles.

(ii) Copyright transfer

Authors will be asked to transfer copyright of the article to the Japan Society for Reproductive Medicine. This will ensure the widest possible protection and dissemination of information under copyright laws. Open Choice articles do not require transfer of copyright as the copyright remains with the author. In opting for open access, they agree to the Springer Open Choice License.

(iii) Offprints/Reprints

Corresponding authors are entitled to receive a free electronic offprint (PDF format) of their paper for their own personal use. Printed versions can be ordered by the corresponding author.

(iv) Color for Free

Publication of color illustrations is free of charge, both in print and online.

(v) Online First

The article will be published online after receipt of the corrected proofs. This is the official first publication citable with the DOI. After release of the printed version, the paper can also be cited by issue and page numbers. After online publication, further changes can be made only in the form of an Erratum, which will be hyperlinked to the article.

(vi) Proofreading

Authors are informed by e-mail that a temporary URL has been created from which they can obtain their proofs. The purpose of the proof is to check for typesetting errors and the completeness and accuracy of the text, tables, and figures. Substantial changes in content, e.g., new results, corrected values, title and authorship, are not allowed without the approval of the Editor.

Instructions for editorial manager

Author accounts

Authors entering the journal's Editorial Manager site can either create a new account or use an existing one. When you have an existing account, use it for all your submissions; you can track their status on the same page. If you have forgotten your username and password, please click the link "Send Username/Password" and enter your e-mail address. You will then receive an automatically generated e-mail with your username and password. Alternatively, please create a new account and then follow the instructions given on the screen.

Getting started

Once you have logged into your account, Editorial Manager will lead you through the submission process in an orderly, step-by-step process. If you cannot finish your submission in one visit, you can save a draft and re-enter the process later at the same point for that manuscript. While submitting your electronic manuscript, you will be required to enter data about your manuscript and to indicate one preferred executive editor and three preferred referees. Please provide contact information (affiliations, e-mail addresses, and fax numbers) for your preferred referees. Required manuscript data include full title, author names and affiliations, and other information, as listed above, under Manuscript preparation. Support for special characters is available.

Uploading files

Main Documents: Main documents of articles should be uploaded in rich text format (.rtf) or as Microsoft Word documents (.doc).

Tables: Use the table functions of your word-processing program, not spreadsheets, to create tables.

Tables may be uploaded separately from the main document.

Figures: Common graphics files such as GIF, JPEG, EPS, and TIFF are supported. Please upload figures that are satisfactory for the review process and for printing according to Artwork guidelines described at the end of this instruction. After the components of the article have been uploaded in this manner, the system will convert the files to PDF format. You are required to view the result of the conversion with Adobe Acrobat Reader. After you approve submission, you will be notified by e-mail that your submission was successful. At any point during this process, there are Help buttons available to see frequently asked questions.

Keeping track

After submission, you may return and monitor the progress of your submission through the review process.