

Instructions for Authors

(Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences – Medical Journal) - BHAAAS-Medical Journal

Aims and Scope

The BHAAAS Medical Journal (Abr. BHAAAS Med J.) is a peer-reviewed, open-access scientific journal published by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences (BHAAAS Med J). The journal is dedicated to publishing high-quality research in all areas of clinical medicine, biomedical sciences, and public health. BHAAAS Med J seeks to advance knowledge, support evidence-based practice, and foster collaboration between researchers, clinicians, and healthcare professionals and the global scientific community.

BHAAAS Med J is a diamond open-access journal. All articles are freely available online immediately upon publication without subscription or access charges. Authors are not required to pay article processing or publication fees.

1. General Principles

- The journal publishes original articles in the fields of medicine, biomedicine, and public health.
- All manuscripts undergo double-blind peer review.
- Authors are fully responsible for the accuracy and integrity of their work.
- The journal adheres to the ICMJE Recommendations and follows the COPE Code of Conduct.

2. Types of Articles

The journal accepts the following categories of manuscripts:

- 1Original Research Articles – up to 4,000 words, max. 30 references.
- 2Review Articles and Meta-Analyses– up to 6,000 words, up to 80 references (by invitation or approval).
- 3Case Reports – up to 2,000 words, up to 15 references.
- 4Short Communications / Case Reports – up to 2,000 words, max. 15 references.
- 5Letters to the Editor – up to 800 words, max. 10 references.
- 6Editorials / Commentaries – by invitation only.
- 7Clinical and laboratory protocols
- 8. Images in medicine
- Special section: Young Researcher's Corner, dedicated to PhD candidates and early-career researchers (medical students in their graduate year are invited to submit their research projects with a mentor)

Manuscript Structure

3. Original Article

3.1. Title Page

- Title of the manuscript.
- Author names (first name, middle initial, last name).
- Author affiliations (institution, city, country).
- Corresponding author (name, address, email, phone).
- Conflict of interest statement.
- Funding statement (if applicable).
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Specific Guidelines for Original Research Articles

3.2. Abstract

- Maximum 250 words.
- For original articles, provide a structured abstract with the following subheadings: Introduction, Methods, Results, Conclusion.
- Include 3–6 keywords using MeSH terminology.

3.3. Main Text

- Original Articles should follow the IMRAD format: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion.
- Use Vancouver referencing style (numerical, in order of citation).
- Word Count: Up to 4,000 words (excluding references, tables, and figures).

3.4. References

- References must follow the Vancouver style.
- In-text citations should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear.
- The reference list should appear at the end of the manuscript, with journal titles abbreviated according to Index Medicus.
- Examples:
 - Journal article: Smith J, Doe P. Title of article. N Engl J Med. 2021;384(1):12–20.
 - Book: Brown A. Medical Research Methods. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford Univ Press; 2020.

3.5. Tables and Figures

- Each table and figure must be numbered and include a descriptive title and legend.
- Figures must be submitted in high resolution (300 dpi) in JPG, PNG, or TIFF format.
- A maximum of 5 tables/figures per article is allowed unless justified.

3.6. Supplementary Material

Authors may submit supplementary files (datasets, multimedia, extended protocols) that will be published online alongside the article.

4. Review Articles and Meta-Analysis

4.1. Scope

- Review articles provide a comprehensive, critical, and updated overview of a specific topic in medicine, biomedicine, or public health.
- They should synthesize evidence, highlight controversies, identify gaps in knowledge, and propose directions for future research.

4.2. Structure

1 Title Page – same as in general guidelines.

2 Abstract – up to 400 words, unstructured or structured (Background, Methods of Literature Search, Summary of Findings, Conclusion).

3 Keywords – 3–6 MeSH terms.

4 Main Text – suggested sections:

- Introduction (importance of the topic, objectives of the review).
- Methods of Literature Search and Selection (databases searched, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria, time frame).
- Main Body (organized thematically or chronologically; include critical appraisal of evidence).
- Discussion (summary of findings, controversies, limitations, and implications).
- Conclusion (concise final statement).

1 References – up to 80, preferably recent and high-quality sources.

2 Tables and Figures – may include summary tables, flow diagrams, or conceptual models.

4.3. Word Count

- Up to 6,000 words (excluding references, tables, and figures).

4.4. Authorship

- Ideally authored by experts in the field. Unsolicited reviews are accepted only after editorial approval.
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5. Case Reports

5.1. Scope

- Case reports describe unique or rare clinical cases, new diseases, unusual presentations, novel diagnostic methods, innovative treatments, or unexpected complications.
- They should provide a clear educational or clinical lesson.

5.2. Structure

1 Title Page – same as in general guidelines.

2 Abstract – up to 150 words, unstructured (Background, Case Description, Conclusion).

3Keywords – 3–5 MeSH terms.

4Main Text:

- Introduction (why the case is important, relevance to the field).
- Case Presentation (patient demographics, history, physical findings, diagnostic assessment, treatment, outcomes).
- Discussion (comparison with similar cases in the literature, novelty, limitations, and teaching points).
- Conclusion (concise statement of the clinical relevance).

1References – up to 15.

2Figures – clinical images, radiographs, pathology slides, etc., must be anonymized and accompanied by legends.

5.3. Word Count

- Up to 2,000 words.

5.4. Ethics

- Case reports require written informed consent from the patient (or guardian).
- Anonymity must be strictly preserved (no identifying data, initials, or hospital numbers).
- Informed consent for patient de-identified images must be obtained and sent prior to publication.

6. Ethical Considerations

BHAAAS Medical Journal adheres to the guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Authors must disclose. Written informed consent is required for case reports and for any patient data or images where individuals could be identified.

- Human studies must have ethics committee approval and informed consent from participants.
- Animal studies must comply with recognized ethical guidelines.
- Authors must disclose all potential conflicts of interest and funding sources.
- Cases of plagiarism, duplicate publication, or data fabrication will result in immediate rejection

6.1. Human Subjects Research

- All studies involving human participants must comply with the Declaration of Helsinki (2013 revision).
- Manuscripts must include:
 - Name of the ethics committee/institutional review board (IRB) that approved the study.
 - The approval/reference number.
 - A clear statement that written informed consent was obtained from all participants (or their legal guardians for minors or incapacitated persons).
- For clinical trials, registration in a recognized clinical trial registry (e.g., ClinicalTrials.gov, EU Clinical Trials Register, ISRCTN) is strongly recommended.

6.2. Animal Research

- Studies involving animals must comply with the ARRIVE guidelines (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) and follow institutional and national regulations.
- Manuscripts should specify:
 - The animal welfare regulations followed (e.g., EU Directive 2010/63/EU, NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals).
 - The institutional ethics approval number.
 - Measures taken to minimize suffering (anesthesia, analgesia, humane endpoints).

6.3. Case Reports

- Authors must obtain written informed consent from patients (or legal guardians) prior to submission.
- Consent forms must be kept by the authors and available upon request.
- Authors must ensure complete anonymity (no names, initials, dates of birth, hospital numbers, or identifiable photos unless explicit consent for publication is given).

6.4. Data Integrity and Misconduct

- Fabrication, falsification, manipulation of images, or plagiarism will result in immediate rejection and may be reported to the authors' institutions.
- All manuscripts may be checked with plagiarism detection software (e.g., iThenticate).
- Authors may be required to provide raw data or additional documentation upon editorial request.

6.5. Conflicts of Interest and Funding

- All authors must disclose any financial or personal relationships that could influence the work (e.g., consultancy, stock ownership, patents, paid expert testimony).
- The source of financial support or sponsorship must be clearly acknowledged.
- If there are no conflicts of interest, the manuscript should include the statement:
 - "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

6.6. Authorship and Contributions

- Authorship must follow ICMJE criteria:
 - 1 Substantial contributions to conception/design, acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data.
 - 2 Drafting or revising the article critically.
 - 3 Final approval of the version to be published.
 - 4 Accountability for all aspects of the work.
- Individuals who contributed but do not meet these criteria should be acknowledged (e.g., statistical analysis, technical support, language editing).

6.7. Publication Ethics

- The journal follows the standards of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).
- Editors may retract, correct, or issue an expression of concern if ethical misconduct is confirmed.
- Duplicate submissions or simultaneous submission to another journal are not allowed.

7. Technical Requirements

- Manuscripts must be submitted in Microsoft Word (.docx) format.
- Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt, line spacing 1.5.
- Margins: 2.5 cm.
- Language: English (British or American, but consistent).
- Abstract and keywords in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian may be required in addition.

7. Peer Review Process

- All submissions undergo initial editorial screening for originality, scientific quality, and compliance with author guidelines
- Manuscripts considered suitable are then sent for double-blind peer review to at least two independent reviewers.
- Average time to first decision: 8-12 weeks.
- Authors may be asked to revise their manuscripts before final acceptance.
- Final editorial decisions regarding acceptance, revision, or rejection are made by the editorial board.

8. Publication Fees

- At present, there are no submission or publication charges.
- The journal is open access, with free full-text availability.

9. Copyright and Open Access Policy

- Articles are published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.
- Authors retain copyright but grant the journal the right of first publication.

9.1. Open Access Statement

- All articles published in the BHAAAS Medical Journal are fully open access and immediately available online, free of charge, for readers worldwide.
- The journal does not charge submission fees, article processing charges (APCs), or publication fees.
- Authors and readers do not incur any costs.

9.2. Copyright Policy

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- By submitting a manuscript, authors grant the journal the non-exclusive right of first publication.
- After publication, authors may freely:
 - Share the final published version on institutional repositories, personal websites, or social media.
 - Reuse parts of the article (figures, tables, text) in future publications, provided proper citation is given.

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- All published articles are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0).
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 - Adapt (remix, transform, and build upon the material).
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 - Attribution – proper credit must be given to the original authors and the journal.
 - NonCommercial – material may not be used for commercial purposes.

9.4. Author's Rights

Authors are free to:

- Deposit their article in institutional repositories (Green Open Access).
- Share the PDF of the published article with colleagues, students, and on professional networks (e.g., ResearchGate, Academia.edu).
- Use content in educational and research settings without restriction.

9.5. Publisher's Rights

- The journal reserves the right to be recognized as the original publisher of the article.
- Proper citation must include the article's DOI (Digital Object Identifier) and reference to the BHAAAS Medical Journal.

9.6. Self-Archiving Policy

- Preprints (the version before peer review) may be shared at any time.
- Postprints (accepted manuscripts after peer review, before typesetting) may be deposited in repositories with a note:
 - “This is the peer-reviewed and accepted version of the manuscript. The final version is available at [Journal Name, DOI].”
- The publisher's version (final PDF) may be shared immediately after publication under the CC BY-NC 4.0 license.

9.7. Compliance with Open Access Mandates

- The journal's open access policy is fully compliant with major funders' requirements, including:
 - Plan S,
 - NIH Public Access Policy,
 - Horizon Europe,
 - Wellcome Trust,
 - and other international mandates.