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<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AuthorAID>



How to obtain the greatest benefit from AuthorAID in the Eastern Mediterranean

1. Which journal?

Your research is important, but who should know about it? Colleagues in your own country, in your region, or in the whole world? Where are your findings applicable? To local, national, regional, or international populations?

By choosing the most appropriate journal, you increase the chances that your research will be accepted, read, cited, appreciated and used by colleagues who need to know about it to improve health in their setting.

By choosing the journal before we begin to edit your manuscript, you can **save time**. Most journals have detailed, specific rules about aspects of format, and it is important to follow all these rules strictly. Good compliance with the journal's Instructions to Authors or Guidelines for Manuscript preparation creates a favorable initial impression and shows the editor that you are professional and careful with the details.

2. How much editing?

Editing a manuscript that reports original research in the format Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion, References, Tables and Figures can require 2 to 8 hours depending on the complexity of the science and the language. The aim of editing is to ensure that reviewers and editors will pay respectful attention to the scientific content, and not be confused by problems with the English or the organization of the text. So the language and writing should be clear, simple and accurate.

Here is a basic list of characteristics of a well-edited manuscript:

1. The title states the subjects or patients, the methods, and possibly the main result.
2. The Abstract reflects the contents.
3. The Introduction mentions the target population of readers and ends with a statement of the problem, question or hypothesis.
4. The Methods don't keep secrets.
5. The Results focus on the question asked in the Introduction.
6. The Discussion focuses on the question asked in the Introduction and explains what your findings mean.
7. There are no discrepancies in the data and information between the abstract, the main text and the figures or tables.

8. The article satisfies your readers' expectations. Study your target journal and edit your manuscript by adding, deleting or modifying things to adapt the article to the readers of your chosen journal.

You can **save time** by preparing a complete manuscript before we begin to edit, with all parts in place from the title page to the references, tables and figures. Also, **time can be saved** if we work with on screen with an electronic file. If we work with the manuscript on paper, please remember to print it with double spacing so that there is enough space to write corrections and notes.

If you have already submitted your manuscript and are ready to revise it in accordance with the comments from the peer reviewers, please bring their comments and the editor's decision letter with you.

3. Will editing lead to acceptance? We hope so!

Perfection is impossible, but the aim is for the manuscript to make a perfectly good impression on the editor and peer reviewers. So even if the manuscript has been edited before you send it to the journal, it is a good idea to have it checked (proofread) a final time to catch small errors that can reduce the editor's and reviewers' respect for your manuscript. The title, abstract, beginning of the Introduction, and tables and figures are particularly important because these are the parts that readers look at first.

Many reviewers and editors ask the authors to "please have a native English speaker review the manuscript" even if we have already edited the paper. There is no research data to explain this behavior. I think it is simply a bad habit that reviewers use when they can't find anything important to say, especially if their own first language is not English.

Even when the editor and reviewers are favorably impressed by the manuscript, they will usually ask for additional changes and corrections. They often suggest corrections to the English. Sometimes these corrections are helpful, but sometimes there are not. Sometimes they are even wrong and create an error in the text, or change the original meaning. Reviewers are experts in science, but they are not always experts in English.

4. Evaluation of the AuthorAID project

It is important to record the outcome of editing so we can evaluate the effectiveness of AuthorAID projects, so please remember two things:

1. Please thank the AuthorAID editor by name in the Acknowledgments so that there is a record of the editing work.
2. Please let me know (kshashok@kshashok.com):
 - if the manuscript was accepted or rejected,
 - if the journal asked for additional changes, or
 - if the journal said there were problems with the English.

Thank-you for the opportunity to work with you!