INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

EPIDEMIOLOGY publishes about 15% of all submitted manuscripts. Manuscripts are accepted based on research quality, originality, significance, writing and presentation quality, and interest to the readers of EPIDEMIOLOGY. The editors decline about three-quarters of submissions within a week of receipt; corresponding authors are notified promptly by e-mail. The rest are sent for double-blind peer review. All original articles and brief reports published in the journal are subject to peer review by at least two independent external peer reviewers, as well as by the editors. All research letters published in the journal are subject to peer review by at least one independent external peer reviewer, as well as by the editors. Median time to first decision for reviewed manuscripts is 32 days, with 90% receiving a first decision within eight weeks. Expedited review and publication are possible for time-sensitive papers.

We do not consider pre-submission inquiries, because we can best evaluate your paper when we see the entire manuscript (see editorial).

Published papers are eligible for the annual Rothman EPIDEMIOLOGY Prize, which includes an award of $5000.

Original Research Articles (1500 to 4000 words): Research articles should begin with a short introduction (background and reason for undertaking the work), followed by Methods, Results, and Discussion. Authors may wish to consult STROBE for guidance on the presentation of original epidemiologic research (see editorial). Papers on methodology are not required to follow this structure. EPIDEMIOLOGY welcomes papers that present precisely measured persuasively null results for which either prior data or a compelling rationale exists for a non-null effect (see editorial).

Brief Reports (up to 1500 words): We encourage brief reports of research results or methodological developments that can be presented succinctly. Brief reports should follow the content and structure of original research articles.

Validation Studies (2000 words): Validation studies should follow the outline for an Original Research Article and should provide estimates to inform bias analyses or otherwise be of use in epidemiologic research (see editorial). Examples include estimates of measurement error for continuous variables, classification parameters for discrete variables (sensitivity, specificity, or positive and negative predictive values), strengths of association to inform analyses of an unmeasured
confounder, or participation proportions within combinations of exposures and outcomes. The validation study should be designed and the results presented to optimize their utility in other similar settings.

**Review Articles and Meta-analyses (up to 5000 words):** We welcome review articles and meta-analyses. These should be written for a general epidemiologic audience. Authors may wish to consult PRISMA or other published guidelines for the conduct and presentation of meta-analyses.

**Commentaries (up to 2000 words):** Commentaries may address any topic of interest to the epidemiologic community, including the implications of specific findings for public health policy or descriptions of novel hypotheses with strong plausibility. The editors occasionally invite commentaries on selected papers without consulting the authors; authors who wish to respond are free to do so through a letter to the editor.

**Letters (up to 400 words, 4 references):** Letters allow authors to submit critical responses to published papers. Letters are published only online, but will be listed in the corresponding issue’s table of contents and indexed in PubMed.

**Research Letters (up to 600 words, 1 table or figure, 8 references):** Research letters allow authors to present original data in a succinct format. Like Original Research Articles or Brief Reports, these manuscripts are subject to peer review. Letters are published only online, where they are available for free. They will be listed in the table of contents of an issue and indexed in PubMed.

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**Title Page:** Include the following details on the title page:

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- Manuscript title (simple, direct, and without naming the specific study; see editorial).
- Authors’ full names (without degrees) and affiliations at the time the work was done
- Corresponding author’s name and mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address
- Suggestion for a running head (abbreviated title, up to 50 characters)
- Description of conflicts of interest, or statement that there is no conflict of interest
- Sources of financial support (see instructions above); please note especially the National Institutes of Health, Research Councils UK, Wellcome Trust, or the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which have special requirements for manuscript access.
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Acknowledgements (including colleagues who contributed to the research but who do not meet the requirements for authorship)
Upload the title page as a separate file when you submit the manuscript.

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Please adhere to the following style and format details:

- Submissions should conform to the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*. For details of style and format, consult the *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors* (10th edition).
- To facilitate blind review, please remove obvious identifying information from all parts of the manuscript except the separately submitted title page. Do not delete or mask authors' names in the reference list.
- Use the term "sex" when reporting biological factors and the term "gender" when reporting identity, psychosocial, or cultural factors. Describe the methods used to determine sex or gender.
- Avoid acronyms unless they are widely recognized (e.g., HIV is acceptable but UGH is not [Uveitis Glaucoma Hyphema syndrome]). Define acronyms and abbreviations at first mention in text (see editorial) and the Editors' Notepad.
- Use metric and SI units of measure.
- Footnotes are acceptable in tables but not in the main text or figures. Use lower-case letters as footnote symbols, in alphabetical order within each table.
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- Format all files for 8.5 X 11-inch paper with at least a 1-inch (2.5-cm) margins on all sides. Number the pages but do not provide other information in headers or footers. Double-space all text, and align text only on the left side. Do not include line numbers.
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**METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES**

**Significance Testing:** For estimates of causal effects, we strongly discourage the use of categorized P-values and language referring to statistical significance (see discussion of this topic). We prefer instead interval estimation, which conveys the precision of the estimate with respect to sampling variability. We are more open to testing with respect to modeling decisions, such as for tests of interaction (see editorial) and for tests for trend, and with respect to studies using high-dimensional testing, such as genome-wide association or other genomic platforms.
Reproducibility: The editors encourage authors to provide information that enables other researchers to reproduce their analyses (see editorial). For example, include:

- Counts for cell numbers in crude analyses
- Analytic code used for the analysis
- Code used to develop and analyze data
- Source of data, if publicly available

Interactions: We prefer evaluation of interactions between variables as departure from additive effects. Whether evaluated as departure from additive or multiplicative effects, authors who report interactions should present effects of the separate exposures and their joint effects (with confidence intervals)—each relative to the group not exposed to either factor. An equivalent approach is to report the relevant parameters from a regression model (i.e., the individual coefficients for both exposures and their product term) (see editorial).

Validity: We encourage the use of quantitative methods to evaluate the influence of important threats to validity, including missing data, differential selection or loss-to-follow-up, confounding due to an unmeasured potential confounder, or measurement error (see Good Practices paper).

Precision: Avoid an excessive number of decimal places (pseudo-precision). For example, percents should be rounded to nn%, n.n%, or 0.0n% and risk ratios should be rounded to nn, n.n, or 0.nn unless clarity of the presentation and the sample size justify more significant digits (see editorial).

Study participation: Provide detailed information on the number and response proportions at each step in the assembly of the study population and analysis of data (see editorial). Flow charts to depict study enrollment can be very effective in portraying this information.

Instrumental variables: We provide specific guidelines for reporting instrumental variable analyses (see guidelines).

Comparative effectiveness and safety research: Specify the randomized trial that is being emulated (see editorial).

FOR RESEARCHERS FROM LOW RESOURCE COUNTRIES

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MANUSCRIPT SECTIONS

Abstract: Research articles should have a structured abstract, with headings for Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. The Methods section should identify the study population, study years, and location, if appropriate. Unstructured abstracts are allowed for unstructured papers (e.g.,
methodology papers). Abstracts are limited to 250 words (150 words for Brief Reports); these do not count as part of the main text word count. Do not include references in abstracts. Use abbreviations sparingly and only in accordance with the instructions above.

Enter the abstract in 2 places: the appropriate box in Editorial Manager and also as the first page of the main text file.

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Enter the keywords in 2 places: the appropriate box in Editorial Manager and also after the Abstract on the first page of the main text file.

**Main Text:** Include the following in the main text file: the abstract, the body of the text, tables, figures, figure legends, and reference list.

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**Tables:** Prepare tables using the “Table” feature of your word processing software. Tables from Excel or other spreadsheet programs should not be used. Double-space tables, and use no lines except horizontal lines in the headings. See any issue of EPIDEMIOLOGY for examples.

Number tables in order of their presentation in text. Give each table a clear title, without repeating details from the text. Explanatory footnotes should be labeled with lower-case letters, in alphabetical order.

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Submit figures exactly as you would like them to appear in print. Figures are typically published as one column width (8.5 cm); prepare them approximately this size. See any issue of EPIDEMIOLOGY for examples.

Number figures in the order they are discussed in the text. For figures with several parts, label each part alphabetically (A, B, etc.) in the upper left corner of the figure. Panel figures should have the same scale for all axes. Color figures are printed at the author’s expense, except when the Open Access fee is paid (see Publication Charges).

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2. Create, scan and save your artwork and compare your final figure to the Digital Artwork Guideline Checklist (below).

B) Digital Artwork Guideline Checklist

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(AK Smith, written communication, June 2003)

(SB Jones, unpublished data, 2003)

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