How to survive peer review?

PROFESSOR JIAN-MIN LIU

Associate Chief-Editor of Journal of Diabetes, Chinese Journal of Endocrinology and Metabolism

Vice Chief, Department of Endocrine and Metabolic Diseases, Rui-jin Hospital, Shanghai Jiao-tong University School of Medicine.
2 golden rules

1. Remember why want to publish your manuscript? 
   Most certainly because you have something new to say

2. Understand the manuscript submission and importance of peer review for successful publication
Be original, have something new to say that will leave an impact
The importance of novelty

How to prepare an original article?

Novelty is the core element

- Extensive reading with deep thinking
- Well designed and organized
- Brand new with endless aftertastes
Example (1)

The clinical picture of primary hyperparathyroidism in Western countries has already changed:

- Western countries: 70%-80% PHPT asymptomatic
- 1958-1993, Beijing: 97% still presented with classical and severe symptoms
Example (1)

How about in recent 10 years in China?

JCEM 2013;98:721-728
The regulatory role of osteocalcin on energy metabolism

Horm Res 2009;71(S1):134-138
OCN/unOC has related with insulin resistance, obesity, diabetes, MetS, PCOS, GDM, and etc.

Lots of papers have already been published!

### Study (year) | Study (type) | Results
---|---|---
Im et al. (2008) | 339 postmenopausal women (31 with Type 2 diabetes, X) | Serum TOC was lower in the control (15 vs 22.2) with HbA1c (0.22 vs 0.02)
Zhou et al. (2009) | 254 men (128 newly diagnosed Type 2 diabetes) and 180 postmenopausal women (92 with diabetes, X) | Serum TOC was lower in the control (11.5 vs 16.6+ mg/dL)
Kindblom et al. (2009) | 817 nondiabetic and 153 diabetic men (X) | Diabetic men had lower TOC (p < 0.001)
Kanazawa et al. (2009) | 179 men and 149 postmenopausal women with Type 2 diabetes (X) | TOC correlated negatively (a = -0.34 for men, p = 0.001; and HbA1c (α = -0.36) correlated with total p = 0.0038)
Fernandez-Real et al. (2009) | 149 nondiabetic men (00) and 46 nondiabetic men and women (I) | Serum TOC correlated (p < 0.001) and total adiposity by dietary weight loss (8.7%) and..."n"
Pittas et al. (2009) | 380 men and women (X), 198 (L), 5% with diabetes | Serum TOC inversely (p < 0.001), insulin (β = 0.002), higher TOC fasting glucose over 100 mg/dL
Salerni et al. (2010) | 2393 men and women (X) | Serum TOC inversely by leptin, and possible (p < 0.001) for each year..."n"
Yip et al. (2010) | 2765 older men with metabolic syndrome present in 70% (28.8%) | TOC level was inversely glucose, triglylcine (X) in men with metabolic: 0.12; HbA1c (95% CI 0.35; TOC: 1.25-16.55 μg/dL

### Study (year) | Study (type) | Results
---|---|---
Hwang et al. (2009) | 199 men (X) | Higher uCOC level associated with greater insulin sensitivity (highest vs lowest tertile: HOMA-B 81 vs 65%, p < 0.05)
Shea et al. (2009) | 348 nondiabetic men and women (M = 142, F = 206; X, L) | Lower total and carboxylated osteocalcin levels (not uOC) associated with IR (p = 0.006 and p = 0.02, respectively), association attenuated by adjustment for adiponectin. Higher carboxylated osteocalcin level at baseline predicted less change in IR at 3 years, lower % uCOCC predicted greater increase in IR
Kanazawa et al. (2009) | 50 men and women with poorly controlled Type 2 diabetes (L) | After 1 month of improved glycemic control, TOC level increased (+1.9 μg/dL, p < 0.001) and the ratio of uCOC/TOC decreased (-0.15, p < 0.01)
Kanazawa et al. (2011) | 180 men and 109 postmenopausal women with Type 2 diabetes (X) | In adjusted analyses, log of uOC was inversely correlated with fasting glucose (β = -0.32, p < 0.001) and HbA1c (β = -0.22, p = 0.17) in men. No corresponding associations of uOC were seen in postmenopausal women

*Expert Rev. Endocrinol. Metab. 2011;6: 177*
New finding: Serum osteocalcin is positively related with fat-free mass in pre-menopausal women

Table 2. Associations Between the Serum Osteocalcin Level and Fat-Free Mass in the Total Cohort and Pre- and Postmenopausal Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Total Cohort</th>
<th>Premenopausal Women</th>
<th>Postmenopausal Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$r$</td>
<td>$P$</td>
<td>$r$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1*</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>0.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2*</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>0.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 3*</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>0.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 4*</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>0.190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All models were adjusted for age, BMI, physical activity, smoking, alcohol consumption, and hormone therapy (for postmenopausal women).
How to prepare a review article?

3 key elements to remember:

- Summarize others work in a balanced way
- Tell your thoughts with your own work
- Define the research direction

骨：另一个潜在的治疗、预防和预测糖尿病的目标

*Bone: Another potential target to treat, prevent and predict diabetes*

*Diabetes Obes Metab.* 2018;20(8):1817-1828
Never copy others, even the methods
Understand the publication process and how to survive peer-review
Peer review is the evaluation of work by one or more people of similar competence to the producers of the work (peers). It constitutes a form of self-regulation by qualified members of a profession within the relevant field.

Definition from Wikipedia
The perception of peer review

Cartoon from community.acs.org
Why is peer review so important?

Peer review methods are employed to maintain standards of quality, improve performance, and provide credibility. In academia, scholarly peer review is often used to determine an academic paper's suitability for publication. Peer review can be categorized by the type of activity and by the field or profession in which the activity occurs, e.g., medical peer review.

Definition from Wikipedia
Understanding peer review

The different types of peer review

Single-blinded and double-blinded peer-review types are the most commonly used in academic publishing, however other types have been gaining popularity over the last few years:

- Open peer-review
- Cascading peer-review
- Collaborative peer-review
- Post-publication peer-review

All based on the emerging need for greater transparency (without compromising confidentiality)
Getting published – Understand the process

Stage 1 - The process after submitting your manuscript

Manuscript submitted

Full external review

“Fast track” rejection

- Scope?
- Priority?

→ Saves author/ reviewer time
Getting published – Understand the process

Stage 2 - The peer review process

1. Paper submitted to Editor
   - Editor sends paper to referees
     - Referees return comments
       - Editor makes decision
         - Reject
         - Accept
         - Send back for revision

   - Rejection before review
   - Rejection after review
   - Rejection after revision

Graph courtesy of David Nicholson/Amanda Davis
Getting published – Understand the process

Stage 3 – After peer review

Peer review completed

- Accept
- Minor revision
- Major revision
- Reject
- Reject and invite for new submission
- Appeal?

- No or limited further experiments required
- Further experiments...

Research Seminar 2018
Key tips:

- Choose the right journal
- “Sell” your work through a nice cover letter
  - Show your “muscle”
  - Good presentation of your work
Choosing the right journal

- Scope of the journal
- Reputation of the journal & Editorial
- Publication speed
- Editorial office
Look out for latest technologies

Check if your selected journal proposes Penelope AI for the review of manuscripts

This is being piloted with Prenatal Diagnosis, a Wiley Journal

What is Penelope AI?
- Allows you to screen your manuscript before submitting it for peer review

How does it work?
- AI uses natural language processing to check the presence or absence of critical items within manuscripts.
- For example, in Prenatal Diagnosis it checks that the PRISMA reporting guideline and checklist for systematic reviews and meta-analysis has been followed
- It looks after conflict of interest statements and statements confirming ethics review and informed consent

Gives researchers instant feedback that they can choose to address before submitting the manuscript

https://www.penelope.ai/
“Sell” your work – a nice cover letter

• **Importance** and **Novelty** of your work
• It is **NOT** abstract
• Does it fit the **scope** of the journal?
• **Practical application**

**Write this for the EDITOR!**
Know what a reviewer looks at

1. Is your article within scope of the journal?

2. Is it of sufficient quality? e.g.
   - Is it novel and important work?
   - Are the research, analysis and conclusions valid?
   - Does it give a clear statement of aims and achievements?
   - Is the presentation of figures, tables correct?
   - Are calculations correct, do models work?
   - Is existing literature cited appropriately?
   - Is statistical analysis used appropriately?

3. Areas for improvement

4. Ethics – publishing or experimental
If your manuscript is rejected
Before you respond, remember...

- Editors/Reviewers are just trying to help
- Reject - Don’t get angry
- Don’t respond immediately
- Seek advice from your supervisor or colleagues
How to revise your paper

- Instructions to authors
- Point-by-point response
- Specifying where the changes are
- Highlight the changes
- Be courteous
- Be professional
- Be rational
- Check, check, check
- It’s Ok to disagree – but be respectful
How to Respond

- Persistence pays – answer questions and address requests for revisions in a clear and timely fashion
- Avoid personal attack and defensive behavior
- Be polite but not obsequious
- Address each point/comment in the order given
- Explain which changes have been carried out
Summary

Novel Idea
Smart design
Prudent conduction
Proper Interpretation
Professional response
Thank you

May your submission by successful!