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DESCRIPTION

The overarching mission of Practical Radiation Oncology is to improve the quality of radiation oncology practice. PRO’s purpose is to document the state of current practice, providing background for those in training and continuing education for practitioners, through discussion and illustration of new techniques, evaluation of current practices, and publication of case reports. PRO strives to provide its readers content that emphasizes knowledge “with a purpose.” The content of PRO includes: Original articles focusing on patient safety, quality measurement, or quality improvement initiatives Original articles focusing on imaging, contouring, target delineation, simulation, treatment planning, immobilization, organ motion, and other practical issues ASTRO guidelines, position papers, and consensus statements Essays that highlight enriching personal experiences in caring for cancer patients and their families Teaching cases that present a diagnostic, ethical, or management challenge.

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GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

Practical Radiation Oncology (PRO) is a peer-reviewed journal whose purpose is to document the state of radiation oncology practice. PRO publishes original clinical research related to the practice of radiation oncology and related disciplines. Concise manuscripts that focus on imaging, contouring, target delineation, simulation, treatment planning, immobilization, organ motion, patient safety, quality measurement, and other practical issues are of particular interest. PRO intends to provide its readers with content that emphasizes knowledge "with a purpose."

W. Robert Lee, M.D., M.S., M.Ed. serves as the journal's Editor-in-Chief. He can be contacted at the Department of Radiation Oncology, Duke University Medical Center, Box 3085, Durham, NC 27710. Phone: (919) 668-5640; fax: (919) 668-7345; e-mail: pro@astro.org

PRO can be accessed online at www.practicalradonc.org.

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Authors must register with the PRO electronic manuscript system. Those who have previously reviewed or submitted a manuscript for PRO may already be registered. Once the submission files are uploaded, the system automatically generates an electronic PDF proof used for reviewing. All correspondence, including editor decisions and requests for revisions, is conducted by e-mail through EES or pro@astro.org

Article Types

Basic Original Report
Manuscript ≤ 4000 words, figures ≤ 8 references ≤ 50, authors ≤ 20
Required Elements: Cover letter (preferred) Title page Abstract (≤ 300 words) Blinded Manuscript References Figure Legends Uniform disclosure forms

Original Reports are the primary mode of scientific communication in PRO. Authors are encouraged to review the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals" prior to submission. The Editor-in-Chief and a Senior Editor review all Original Reports. All submitted manuscripts are reviewed by external peer reviewers, and when required, a biostatistician. Comments offered by external reviewers are returned to the author(s) for consideration. Authors should focus on accuracy, brevity, and clarity in their presentation and avoid lengthy introductions, repetition of data from tables and figures in the text, and unfocused discussions. Authors should include extended patient demographic data in a table, not within the text.

Teaching Case
Manuscript ≤ 1500 words, figures ≤ 8 references ≤ 50

Required Elements: Cover letter (preferred) Title page Abstract (≤ 300 words) Blinded Manuscript References Figure Legends Uniform disclosure forms

PRO invites case reports with high-resolution images, preferably in color (additional charges may be necessary), including X rays or scans of characteristic or classic conditions relevant to radiation oncology, for consideration in the Teaching Case section. All identifying information of patients, such as names, dates of birth, dates of service, or patient identification codes must be removed. If the case report or the image includes individually identifiable health information, authors must comply with the applicable privacy laws and obtain a HIPAA-compliant patient authorization form.

Technical Report
Manuscript ≤ 1500 words, figures ≤ 8 references ≤ 50

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PRO invites technical reports, which are brief 2- to 3-page descriptions of new developments, devices, or procedures. Technical Reports are concerned with innovations that might enhance practice or address specific challenges in radiation oncology.
**Critical Review**
Manuscript ≤ 4500 words, figures ≤ 8, references ≤ 50

Required Elements: Cover letter (preferred) Title page Abstract ≤ 300 words Blinded Manuscript References Figure Legends Uniform disclosure forms

The Editor-in-Chief typically solicits Critical Reviews, but authors may submit an unsolicited review for consideration. The manuscript must present significant new information to justify publication. Critical Reviews will be reviewed in the same manner as Original Reports.

**Short Communications**
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**Correspondence**

Manuscript ≤ 400 words, references ≤ 10

Required Elements: Title page Manuscript References Uniform disclosure forms

Authors may respond to a published article or express an opinion in a short, freestanding piece. If the Correspondence refers to a published article, the Editor-in-Chief may choose to invite a reply. Correspondence is reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief for possible inclusion in the journal. Letters and replies must be submitted electronically using EES.

**Miscellaneous**

**Special Articles**

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Special Articles are manuscripts whose content and style do not fall under the categories of Original Reports or Critical Reviews. These may include but are not limited to guidelines, summaries of consensus meetings, and other scholarly communications.

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Manuscript ≤ 400 words

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*PRO* invites interesting high-resolution images, preferably in color, including X rays or scans of characteristic or classic conditions relevant to radiation oncology. Exceptional images may be considered for the cover of the journal.

All identifying information of patients, such as names, dates of birth, dates of service, or patient identification codes must be removed.

If the image includes individually identifiable health information, authors must comply with the applicable privacy laws and obtain a HIPAA-compliant patient authorization form.
Narrative Oncology
Manuscript ≤ 1500 words, figures ≤ 8 references ≤ 50

PRO invites Narrative Oncology commentaries that describe the unique challenges in the radiation oncology profession throughout the world. These commentaries are generally invited but we also welcome unsolicited articles of this type.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

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**Guidelines for Reporting Preclinical Research**
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) held a workshop in June 2014 with the Nature Publishing Group and Science on the issue of reproducibility and rigor of research findings with journal editors representing over 30 basic/preclinical science journals in which NIH-funded investigators have most often published. The workshop focused on identifying the common opportunities in the scientific publishing arena to enhance rigor and further support research that is reproducible, robust, and transparent. The journal editors came to consensus on a set of principles to facilitate these goals. The PRO editorial board have chosen to uphold the high standards for preclinical research reporting established by the workshop, and we attach the summarized recommendations here. Please pay particular attention to these before submission.
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Once the peer review process is complete, each manuscript will receive one of the following decisions: **Decline:** The manuscript was not selected for peer review. **Reject:** The manuscript was not selected for publication. Many factors contribute to acceptance, including but not limited to the importance of the research to the field of oncology, the originality of the work, the quality of the study, or the priority of the work to PRO and its readership. **Unacceptable/Major Revision:** A number of issues were raised in peer review that need to be addressed for the manuscript to be reconsidered. If the author wishes to address the issues, the manuscript must be revised and resubmitted within 2 months of the decision. **Acceptable/Minor Revision:** The editors and reviewers found the manuscript potentially acceptable for publication provided minor adjustments are made. Such manuscripts must be revised and resubmitted within 1 month of the decision. **Accept:** The manuscript has been selected for publication. Additional information will be provided regarding the production process.

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