



# SURVEY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

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### DESCRIPTION

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*Survey of Ophthalmology* is a clinically oriented review journal designed to keep **ophthalmologists** up to date. Comprehensive major review articles, written by experts and stringently refereed, integrate the literature on subjects selected for their clinical importance. *Survey* also includes feature articles, section reviews, book reviews, and abstracts.

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Ophthalmologists, Ophthalmology Subspecialists, Vision Researchers, Optometrists.

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In accordance with editorial policy, please prepare a section at the end of the review entitled, "Method of Literature Search." This paragraph should state the databases and search words used, years covered, and additional sources (e.g., articles cited in the reference lists of other articles), and should indicate criteria for inclusion or exclusion of articles from this review. It should also indicate how the foreign literature was treated. Were non-English articles translated, or were English abstracts used? Were some languages included and others omitted? Although not all SURVEY articles require extensive literature coverage, it is important to indicate how the articles that are referenced were selected.

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2) MEDLINE is usually the main resource for locating relevant articles. However, authors should be aware there are many peer-reviewed medical journals worldwide that are not included in MEDLINE. We encourage authors to utilize additional sources, e.g., EMBASE, ISI, etc., if they are available. Authors should also obtain additional references that are cited in the articles they read. It is especially important that all articles reporting results of clinical trials are included.

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"We included articles related to techniques in widespread clinical use and excluded those related to techniques that are considered experimental."

"We excluded studies with follow-up of less than 18 months."

"A few select articles published before 1990 are included for historical purposes, but the review is based mainly on articles published in the past decade."

5) Articles that meet the criteria for inclusion should be included. If the authors of the review feel that the study has important shortcomings, the study should still be cited and the shortcomings stated.

## Editorial

### *Retaining the Past*



We are living in an age of an accelerating information explosion. In MEDLINE alone, there will be about 500,000 citations added to the database in 2004. In ophthalmology and visual sciences we have seen an increase in the number of articles published in many of our standard journals, and a review of the number of pages published per year from 1993 to 2003 indicates an increase as much as 50% per journal.

The question now arises as to what is an author's responsibility for reviewing the literature when preparing an article for publication. Survey of Ophthalmology has for a number of years required its authors to state how they reviewed the literature, including what databases were searched, what key words were used, and what languages were reviewed. The statement of literature search is published at the end of each article.

When conducting a search of the literature, most authors rely only on the MEDLINE database, which goes back to 1996. However, prior to 1966 much significant research was published, and it is available in such abstract journals as Excerpta Medica/EMBASE (1947 to present), Ophthalmic Literature (1947-1998), Zentralblatt für die Gesamte Ophthalmologie und ihre Grenzgebiete (1914-1981), and Zentralblatt für Praktische Augenheilkunde (1877-1919). In addition, the Index Catalog of the Library of the Surgeon General (1880-1961) and the cumulative Index Medicus (1879-1956) are excellent sources of previously published literature. Furthermore, MEDLINE has now embarked on citing the literature in its database going back to 1950; this database is called OLDMEDLINE.

It is apparent that any editor or reviewer, let alone an author, will have great difficulty in keeping track of not only the current literature in relation to their subject but also the past literature. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the individual to undertake a comprehensive and adequate review of the literature, not only when preparing a review article but also when preparing a research article or research grant. It would be pertinent for authors to state in the methods section of their articles and grants how they reviewed the literature. This statement should specifically indicate the rationale for including and excluding articles. For some articles that describe studies done on a new drug or new procedure, a limited review of the literature will probably be adequate, but this limited review may not apply for descriptions of diseases, concepts of disease, or the pathophysiology of the disease.

Considering the tremendous effort that is made in pursuing research as well as preparing it for publication, it is only appropriate for that process to include reviewing what has been done in the past. Survey of Ophthalmology will continue to emphasize the importance of an adequate review of the literature, and it will encourage the use of MEDLINE as well as additional sources for this purpose.

Bernard Schwartz, MD, PhD  
Founding Editor

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1. Geraud G, Spierings EL, Keywood C. Tolerability and safety of frovatriptan with short- and long-term use for treatment of migraine and in comparison with sumatriptan. *Headache*. 2002;42 Suppl 2:S93-9

Issue with supplement

1. Glauser TA. Integrating clinical trial data into clinical practice. *Neurology*. 2002;58(12 Suppl 7):S6-12

Book Chapters

1. Stevens JT. A transcendentalist's view of optics, in Smith JD (ed). *Ophthalmology and the Universe*, Vol. 6, Part 3. Boston, Bayside Press, 2001, ed 2, pp 230-245

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