THE OCULAR SURFACE
A Journal of Review Linking Laboratory Science, Clinical Science, and Clinical Practice

AUTHOR INFORMATION PACK

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DESCRIPTION

The Ocular Surface, a quarterly, a peer-reviewed journal, is an authoritative resource that integrates and interprets major findings in diverse fields related to the ocular surface, including ophthalmology, optometry, genetics, molecular biology, pharmacology, immunology, infectious disease, and epidemiology. Its critical review articles cover the most current knowledge on medical and surgical management of ocular surface pathology, new understandings of ocular surface physiology, the meaning of recent discoveries on how the ocular surface responds to injury and disease, and updates on drug and device development. The journal also publishes select original research reports and articles describing cutting-edge techniques and technology in the field.

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**GUIDE FOR AUTHORS**

A peer-reviewed quarterly journal, *The Ocular Surface* (TOS) features concise, state-of-the-art, referenced review articles to elucidate the vast body of findings in this rapidly evolving field. Its purview ranges from molecular biology to surgery, encompassing lacrimal, lid, and ocular surface physiology, pathology, pharmacology, and medical/surgical therapeutic interventions. TOS also publishes select high impact original research reports and articles describing innovative techniques and technology. Descriptions of desired content and requirements for articles are described below under the section headings: Review Articles; High Impact Original Research Reports; Innovative Techniques and Technology; Research Correspondence; and Special Issue Articles. All manuscripts undergo peer review by two or more reviewers. Authors are asked to revise their manuscripts, addressing all the reviewers' suggestions or explaining their reasons for declining to do so.

**Submission**

Manuscripts must be submitted through Editorial Manager: [https://www.editorialmanager.com/THEOCULARSURFACE/default.aspx](https://www.editorialmanager.com/THEOCULARSURFACE/default.aspx)

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You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

Ensure that the following items are present:

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  - Full postal address

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  - **Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files** (where applicable)
  - **Supplemental files** (where applicable)

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- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)

Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed

Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements

While submitting revision, make sure that you submit: 1. The Revised Manuscript with track changes under the file type "Revised Manuscript with Changes Marked; 2. A clean version of the Revised Manuscript under the file type "Manuscript File"; 3. Response to reviewers in a separate file.

For further information, visit our Support Center.

**Guidelines for Writing Articles**

**Review Articles**

Most reviews are written at the invitation of the editors, but independent proposals of articles are welcomed. To propose a review, please email a brief description of the intended review to Editor-in-Chief Ali Djalilian, MD (adjalili@uic.edu) and Managing Editor David Newcombe (ocularsurface@stellarmed.com). If the editors consider the topic to be appropriate, you will be asked to submit a detailed outline and tentative bibliography for peer review.

**Guidelines**
For these comprehensive reviews we require at least one author (senior author) to have at least 10 years of experience in that particular space. We would like these reviews to go beyond just summarizing what is known and published in the literature and instead to synthesize all the existing information to propose new ideas/paradigms, identify and try to resolve controversies, identify the major gaps in knowledge, what are the technical challenges, what is the outlook for the future.

Reviews should follow a topic-based outline, labeled with headings and subheadings [I, A, 1, a, (1), (a)]. A TOS review should not be a general overview of a topic, but rather an in-depth, literature-based, critical review that emphasizes areas of new information, controversies, etc. The authors' own findings may be cited in the context of findings published in the literature, but original work should not be the focus of the review. The readers will have various levels of understanding about specific topic areas, so it is important for authors to provide the background, definitions, and explanations necessary to enhance understanding. Illustrative figures and diagrams are very helpful.

**Format**

1. **Abstract**
   Please submit a narrative abstract.

2. **Length of Text**
   Appropriate length is usually about 10-14 printed pages (equivalent to about 24-34 double-spaced manuscript pages, including references, figures and tables).

3. **Disclosure**
   In a paragraph before the reference section, authors must disclose any potential conflicts of interest. If no potential conflicts exist, that must be stated.

4. **Method of Literature Search**
   The review manuscript should state the method of literature selection, specifying search words and data bases used, as well as the date of search; number of articles retrieved; criteria for selecting articles for inclusion in review; criteria for excluding articles.

5. **References**
   A review article should not cite all publications relevant to the topic of the article; rather, the references should be selected according to their importance and usefulness in clarifying, documenting, and providing historical background. Multiple similar references to document a statement are usually not needed. The appropriate number of references varies according to the length of the article and the complexity of the topic. The number of references in a 12-14 page review article (20-30 double-spaced typed pages of text) should seldom exceed 150, although there may be exceptions to this guideline. Authors are encouraged to request advice from the editors if it seems that more references are appropriate.

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The goal of including original research articles in TOS is to provide rapid, peer-reviewed publication of high-quality, high-impact information that holds promise of significantly advancing the understanding of the ocular surface. The work should present new conceptual frameworks or novel research findings that challenge or enhance our current approach to clinical practice or research.

**Guidelines**

To this end, the research must:

1. Be original research of the author that is conducted with sound scientific method
2. Provide new information that answers a specific question regarding ocular surface health or disease
3. Provide new, mechanistically based information
4. Be presented according to the author guidelines and format listed below
5. Be performed according to tenets of good laboratory and clinical practice:
   a. If involving laboratory animals, the work should conform to the ARVO guidelines for humane use of such animals;
   b. If involving human subjects, the work should conform to the Declaration of Helsinki and provide for informed consent in an IRB approved protocol;
   c. If involving a clinical trial, should be registered with a clinical trial registry
6. Be presented in a clear, logical manner with sufficient detail to be reproducible by other researchers
7. Present rationale and statistical analysis of data support conclusions

**Format**

1. **Title Page:** (As above under "Manuscript Preparation")
2. **Structured abstract:** A structured abstract of fewer than 250 words is required for original research articles and should be arranged under the following headings: Purpose, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. Abbreviations should be defined at first mention, Do not include references. The abstract must be included as part of the main manuscript file.
3. Text: The Ocular Surface recommends a 3,500 or fewer word count, excluding title page, legends, and references. The text should be double-spaced.

In a brief Introduction, provide the research rationale and objectives without extensively reviewing the literature. In the Methods section, describe the experimental design, subjects used, and procedures followed. Previously published procedures should be identified by reference only. Provide sufficient detail to enable others to duplicate the research. Use standard chemical or nonproprietary pharmaceutical nomenclature. In parentheses, identify specific sources by brand name, company, city, and state or country. A description of the statistical analysis techniques should be included. If human subjects were involved in the investigation, the Methods section must confirm that: (1) the research followed the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki; (2) informed consent was obtained from the subjects after explanation of the nature and possible consequences of the study; and (3) where applicable, the research was approved by the institutional human experimentation committee or institutional review board (IRB).

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6. References (as described under "Manuscript Preparation")

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This publication is type for novel findings that are more limited in scope. The format is similar to an editorial or a letter to editor with no abstract or subheadings in the text. There is a strict 1200 word limit as well as a limit of 7 references. Only one Figure or Table is permitted (not both). Disclosure is required in a paragraph before the reference section. Authors must disclose any potential conflicts of interest. If no potential conflicts exist, that must be stated.

**Special Issue Articles**

These are invited articles that pertain to a central theme. e.g. meibomian gland, infection. The journal creates online collections for each of the themes. Special Issue Articles should follow the same format as High Impact Original Research Reports.

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

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For research involving or pertaining to humans, animals or eukaryotic cells, investigators should integrate sex and gender-based analyses (SGBA) into their research design according to funder/sponsor requirements and best practices within a field. Authors should address the sex and/or gender dimensions of their research in their article. In cases where they cannot, they should discuss this as a limitation to their research's generalizability. Importantly, authors should explicitly state what definitions of sex and/or gender they are applying to enhance the precision, rigor and reproducibility of their research and to avoid ambiguity or conflation of terms and the constructs to which they refer (see Definitions section below). Authors can refer to the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) guidelines and the SAGER guidelines checklist. These offer systematic approaches to the use and editorial review of sex and gender information in study design, data analysis, outcome reporting and research interpretation - however, please note there is no single, universally agreed-upon set of guidelines for defining sex and gender.

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Style

PREPARATION

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To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

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Divide your article into clearly defined and numbered sections. Subsections should be numbered 1.1 (then 1.1.1, 1.1.2, ...), 1.2, etc. (the abstract is not included in section numbering). Use this numbering also for internal cross-referencing: do not just refer to 'the text'. Any subsection may be given a brief heading. Each heading should appear on its own separate line.
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State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

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Provide sufficient details to allow the work to be reproduced by an independent researcher. Methods that are already published should be summarized, and indicated by a reference. If quoting directly from a previously published method, use quotation marks and also cite the source. Any modifications to existing methods should also be described.

Results
Results should be clear and concise.

Discussion
This should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and discussion of published literature.

Conclusions
The main conclusions of the study may be presented in a short Conclusions section, which may stand alone or form a subsection of a Discussion or Results and Discussion section.

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In a paragraph that appears just before the references, all listed authors must state all possible competing interests (conflicts of interest) in the manuscript, including all financial interests (consulting, board membership, stock ownership, patent applications, grants, or honoraria) or non-financial competing interests (sometimes called private interests), which can be personal relationships, political, religious, or personal convictions, academic writing or consulting, or serving as an expert witness, that might lead to bias or a conflict of interest. If there is no conflict of interest, this should also be explicitly stated as none declared. All sources of funding should be acknowledged in the manuscript.

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• Title. Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
• Author names and affiliations. Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. Name should be followed by academic degree(s) and superscript numeral(s) corresponding to institution(s) named in footnote.
• Short title. Provide "short" title for use in running head.
• Title page footnotes. List institutional affiliation(s) of each author preceded by superscript number. Affiliation should be institution where work was performed. If the author has moved, new address should be given as a separate footnote.
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Highlights are optional yet highly encouraged for this journal, as they increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the example Highlights.

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

Structured abstract
A structured abstract, by means of appropriate headings, should provide the context or background for the research and should state its purpose, basic procedures (selection of study subjects or laboratory animals, observational and analytical methods), main findings (giving specific effect sizes and their statistical significance, if possible), and principal conclusions. It should emphasize new and important aspects of the study or observations.
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Immediately after the abstract, provide a maximum of 8 keywords in alphabetical order, using American spelling and avoiding general and plural terms and multiple concepts (avoid, for example, 'and', 'of'). Be sparing with abbreviations: only abbreviations firmly established in the field may be eligible. These keywords will be used for indexing purposes.

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Define abbreviations that are not standard in this field in a footnote to be placed on the first page of the article. Such abbreviations that are unavoidable in the abstract must be defined in parentheses at their first mention, as well as at their first mention in the text. Ensure consistency of abbreviations throughout the article.

Formatting of funding sources
List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements:

Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa].

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